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Making the Dream Become a Reality: How Student Affairs Professionals Support Undocumented Students

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Abstract

There are complex challenges undocumented students in higher education face including the legal system, psychological stressors, campus climate, and financial assistance. This qualitative study was designed to look at how student affairs professionals support undocumented students and their critical role in supporting these students in navigating higher education. Four semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants whose professional position was specifically focused on working with undocumented students. From this study, the researcher identified the challenges undocumented students faced, beneficial resources that supported them, and additional needs that were not being met on these campuses. Recommendations for programs and services for student affairs professionals and institutions are also provided.

Dedication

The completion of this thesis is for my family and recognizing the challenges they face in their daily life. You all taught me at a young age the privilege I have with being born in the United States and how you all overcome daily challenges. You all have taken sacrifices to be here and relocate your lives to provide better opportunities for your families. I hope this inspires others who are in similar situations to keep persisting and reach for the stars. There are individuals who care and are committed to your success.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my parents who have guided and supported me throughout my life. You both have sacrificed so much to give Richie and I better opportunities you weren't able to receive. Especially to the days where you worked long hours and came home exhausted. Just know how much I appreciated what you gave when it came to the sacrifices for your family. You both have inspired me to become a better person every day and humbled me to appreciate the opportunities that are in front of me. At a young age you influenced me to be a confident individual who is proud of their background and to pursue education as much as possible. You have placed efforts to learn about things you do not know and to keep progressing in society. Without your unconditional support I wouldn't be where I am at today.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Undocumented individuals are a growing population with an estimated 10.5 million living in the United States (Krogstad, Passel & Cohn, 2019). From this population, approximately 200,000 to 225,000 undocumented college-aged students make the decision to enroll in higher education, a small percentage of the total college population (Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco, & Suárez-Orozco, 2015). It is estimated that between 5 to 10 percent of undocumented individuals will choose to pursue higher education and may face unique challenges that the traditional college student is not likely to encounter (Gonzales, 2007; Passel, 2003). Many of these challenges are based in the legal and financial obstacles that make it especially difficult for them to persist and graduate with a degree (Gonzales, 2007).

Due to undocumented student's immigration status, they face legal and financial obstacles which includes their ability to receive federal financial aid (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010; Contreras, 2009; Garcia & Tierney 2011; Gonzales, 2016; Pérez Huber & Malagon, 2007). Not having a valid social security number impacts their accessibility to financial support (Bjorklund, 2018). In addition to the legal and financial barriers, these students have to manage psychological issues that include the fear of their own deportation and that of their family, complications in managing the transition of their identity to being undocumented if they were unaware of their documentation status, and facing discrimination based upon their legal status (Abrego, 2011; Cervantes et al., 2015; Bjorklund, 2018). Even though undocumented students experience barriers in being successful in higher education, as a population they have proven to be very resilient and

are often empowered by the narrative of their parents' sacrifice to receive better opportunities and their own aspirations to keep moving forward (Enriquez, 2011; Perez, 2010).

It is important to acknowledge the complex challenges this demographic faces and to look at services that are provided and the intentional practices of student affairs professionals. Every college student at an institution will interact with multiple student affairs professionals in some capacity during their academic journey (Mouris, 2018). The role of the student affairs professional becomes especially important to undocumented students due to the low social capital they hold (Enriquez, 2011). Social capital, such as connecting with a faculty or supportive family and peers, can be useful in receiving support with advice or prior institutional knowledge where undocumented students might be limited in this area (Bourdieu, 1986).

It is vital for student affairs professionals to take the initiative to shape their practice to support undocumented students but in order to do so, they first need to be well informed of the difficulties that undocumented students face (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Professionals who specifically work towards, and are dedicated to, serving undocumented students have the knowledge to see what is most valuable in supporting these students along with the services that are essential for their academic success. This study will focus on the student affairs professionals who directly support undocumented students in their professional roles and the current methods they find valuable in assisting this population in their journey through higher education.

Purpose of Study

This descriptive research study investigated the work that student affairs

professionals whose primarily focus is serving undocumented students. This includes what the student affairs professional is doing with students to promote understanding and support of undocumented students on their campus with students as well as the entire campus community. The findings of this study provided information on how services for this population are perceived on the student affairs professional's campus and what programs and services are viewed as the most valuable and beneficial.

Research Questions

Institutional support for undocumented students is inconsistent across the United States higher education system. A number of institutions have taken active steps to create offices, centers, and programs to support undocumented students on their campus while others have made less official or visible efforts, while some have made no efforts. This study looked at how student affairs professionals working in offices providing programs and services to this population see their work and the impact they have on students. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What do student affairs professionals working in dedicated offices perceive to be the unique challenges undocumented students face in higher education?

2. How has the student affairs professional's institution gone about providing support for the undocumented students on their campus?

3. How does the student affairs professional and others on their campus stay informed regarding the issues and concerns of undocumented students?

4. What additional needs of undocumented students are not being met by the Student Affairs professional's institution and other campus student affairs professionals?

Significance of Study

In the student affairs professional role, it's important to look at the needs at the institution and the demographic of the institution's unique student population. This knowledge can assist student affairs professionals with both their individual practice and what type of skills that they need to develop. Student affairs professionals who work in an office, or hold a specific position, dedicated to the support of undocumented students build techniques and strategies to support this population. They acknowledge the challenges undocumented students encounter through their higher education journey and their needs for support in order to achieve academic success. By understanding these issues and the work being done by those serving this population, student affairs professionals, both at campuses with these services and without, can add to the supportive college environment and aid in the successful completion of the academic efforts of these students.

Limitations of Study

As with any study, there are some limitations present. One of them is the impact of the geographic location of the institutions and the differences in both state law and general political atmosphere which had an impact on the services provided for undocumented students. Another limitation in this study is the generalizability of the information found in the data collection process and inferring the results to other institutions. It is important to consider not all best practices have the ability to be replicated based on various factors. Finally, researcher bias is a limitation in qualitative studies as the existence of the emotional investment the researcher has with the topic. Participant review of transcripts and review of codes and themes by the committee

members as well as the thesis advisor was sought to reduce any researcher bias.

Definitions of Terms

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). executive order created by President Obama which allowed qualified undocumented students to temporarily delay deportation, and, in some states, apply for a driver's license and receive a temporary social security number which allows them the opportunity to have renewable work permits (Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018; Bjorkland, 2018; Teranishi et al., 2015).

Latinx. gender-neutral term to be inclusive of individuals who come from various origins and descents of Latin America (Chang, Torrez, Ferguson, & Sagar, 2017).

Mixed-status families. members of a family who do not share the same immigration status (Oliverez, Chavez, Soriano & Tierney, 2006; Suárez-Orozco, Katsiaficas, Birchall, Alcantar, Hernandez, Garcia, Michikyan, Cerda, & Teranishi, 2015).

Undocumented students. an individual, pursuing higher education, who is not a U.S. citizen or a foreign national with legal immigration status to be in the United States, who has legal concerns in their lives such as ineligibility for employment and the risk of deportation if discovered by the federal government (Oliverez et al., 2006).

Summary

Undocumented students face unique challenges with their journey in higher education, and in this journey, student affairs professionals have an important role. This study aimed to understand how student affairs professionals are supporting undocumented students and learning to best assist their needs. Student affairs professionals are a resource for all college students as at some point in their academic

journey all students will receive some sort of assistance from a professional (Mouris, 2018). Looking into the methods student affairs professionals are using to support this population is important to better understand the concerns and needs of undocumented students and higher education to better support them. Chapter two looks at the history of undocumented students in higher education, the changing nature of their interactions with higher education, and the political and legal evolution of how undocumented students have navigated the higher education process.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

Undocumented students face complex challenges to persist in higher education (Bjorklund, 2018). Some of the unique challenges this demography face includes the legal system, psychological stressors, campus climate and the ability to support themselves financially (Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2014). The understanding of what is means to be undocumented, limited opportunities for employment, and basic rights are other challenges that their citizen peers do not face (Gildersleeve, Rumann & Mondragon, 2010). Typically, being a first-generation student, undocumented students might not have the cultural capital from their parents having college experience (Gildersleeve et al., 2010). Balancing expectations from family, including non-academic pressures such as contributing to the family's income, combined with academic demands can create a feeling of guilt for undocumented students when they do not accomplish all of their goals (Gildersleeve, 2010; Rothenberg, 1996). Overall, the status of undocumented students places them in a unique position where navigating college can be more complex than for others. It is important to understand this demographic and where student affairs professionals can support these students to the best of our abilities.

The literature review will explore some of the obstacles this population faces that can impact their experiences, along with their degree completion in higher education. These obstacles include legal, financial, and social obstacles (Abrego, 2011; Abrego & Gonzales, 2010; Contreras, 2009; Garcia & Tierney 2011; Gonzales, 2016; Pérez Huber & Malagon, 2007). The work of student affairs professionals is important in supporting

these students the best way possible. From this, the study aims to get a better understanding the methods that student affairs professionals use support to undocumented students.

Undocumented Students

According Passel (2006), in the United States approximately 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high school but only around 5% make the transition to go to college. Those that do are more likely to enroll in community college and be a part-time student compared to their peers who are citizens (Abrego, 2008; Flores, 2010; Gonzales, 2016). This is exacerbated by anti-immigration legislation prohibiting this population from being eligible to receive post-secondary in-state tuition and federal financial aid (Rincón, 2008). In addition, the anxiety of one being deported along with family members creates a lifestyle of living in fear and being cautious of every action (Cervantes et al., 2015; Negrón-Gonzales, 2013; Potochnick & Perreira, 2010). All these factors create obstacles for these students, affecting their lives negatively due to their immigrant status. To better understand this population, information about what defines undocumented students along with their history in the United States will be reviewed.

Definition. In 2017, there were around 10.5 million undocumented immigrants living in the United States (Krogstad, Passel & Cohn, 2019). Each undocumented individual has a different narrative of their journey on how they reached the United States, which can include those who were born outside of the United States and their families immigrated to the United States without any legal permission from the government or an individual who overstays their visa (Passel, 2006). According to

Badger and Yale-Lochr (2006), undocumented students are those who either: entered the United States without inspection or with fraudulent documents, or entered legally as a nonimmigrant, but then violated the terms of his or her status and remained in the United States without authorization. Overall, an undocumented student is someone who is not a U.S. citizen, who has limitations in their lives such as approval for employment and the risk of deportation if discovered by the federal government (Oliverez et al., 2006).

History. The United States has a unique history in regard to the different ethnic groups who have migrated into the country (Hernandez & Ortiz, 2016). There has been inconsistency of allowing individuals to come into the United States to work and then deporting them back to their native country when circumstances change (Portes & Bach, 1985). This is especially during the times when there was a shortage or surplus of jobs, limiting immigrant workers during the Depression and then increasing immigrants to work in industries during World War II (Portes & Bach, 1985). Several times throughout U.S. history Mexican laborers have been both allowed to work legally in the United States and encouraged to do so (Portes & Bach, 1985). This market driven demand for labor or calls for limits on labor created a pattern of "cyclical migration" especially for Central and South American workers due to inconsistencies of immigration policies and the changing labor needs of the United States (Portes & Bach, 1985, p. 89). Other significant ethnic groups such as Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, Cubans, Salvadorians, Colombians and Dominicans have immigrated to the United States in order to seek asylum from circumstances in their native country and gain a new future from the United States, a common theme for many immigrants seeking to come to the United States to gain more opportunities and a better future (Hernandez & Ortiz, 2016).

Statistics about Undocumented Students. As of 2017, around 10.5 million undocumented individuals were residing in the United States (Krogstad, Passel & Cohn, 2019). However, only around 200,000 to 225,000 undocumented students are enrolled in higher education, which represents 2% of all college students in the United States (Teranishi & et al., 2015). Around 1.1 million undocumented individuals are under the age of 18 (Educators for Fair Consideration, 2012). As a result, the majority of undocumented students in higher education have lived in the United States for most of their lives, are fluent in English, and often identify as American (Educators for Fair Consideration, 2012).

However, this population has a lower chance of graduating in 4 to 6 years compared to their documented peers due to issues associated with their legal status (Conger & Chellman, 2011; Kurleander, 2006; Rumbaut & Komaie, 2010). Undocumented individuals are present in all states, but a majority resides in California, with approximately 25% of the total undocumented population which amounts to about 2.6 million people (Kim & Chambers, 2015; Hayes & Hill, 2017). Undocumented students tend to be classified as low-income with around 40% being below the poverty level (Abrego, 2008). Since most of undocumented students are brought by parents who emigrate from other countries, they tend to be first-generation and come from either a minority or marginalized ethnic group (Arriola & Murphy, 2010). Around 56% of undocumented individuals are from Mexico with another 22% from countries in Latin America, 13% from Asian countries, 6% from European countries and 3% from Africa (Passel, 2006). Since undocumented students are a smaller percentage of the total college

student population, they have the possibility to be overlooked by many professionals, programs, and services in higher education (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015).

The 1.5 generation. A large portion of undocumented students are brought into the United States by their parents at a young age, under the age of 12 (Abrego, 2011). While those who came as adults are classified as first-generation, those who came as children have been identified as being part of a "1.5" generation (Rumbaut, 2004). Even though from a technical definition they are "first-generation", they identify more as American than feeling connected to or associated closely with their native country (Abrego, 2011). Undocumented children and those who come at a young age often fall into the "1.5" generation of identifying more closely with second-generation peers, those born in the United States to immigrants, than they do to their first-generation parents or even older siblings (Abrego, 2011). People in the 1.5 generation tend to not remember their experiences in their native country and often do not speak their native language fluently or even well (Abrego, 2011). Undocumented individuals who fall in this category are often placed in a difficult position if they are forced to return to their native country when they have adopted the American values and may have no real memories or associations with that country (Abrego, 2006). Even if they have established a home in the U.S., their status often places these undocumented individuals in a situation where they are not fully accepted in society, feeling like they do not belong in the U.S. or in their native country (Abrego, 2008; Gurrola, Ayon, & Salas, 2013).

Mixed-status Families. The family structure of undocumented students can become even more complex if members of the family do not share the same immigration status. According to Oliverez et al. (2006), a U.S. citizen is defined as a person who was

born in the United States or becomes a naturalized citizen. Someone who is a U.S. citizen may not be deported and additionally can petition for other family members to immigrate to the U.S. (Oliverez et al., 2006). Many students who report being in a mixed-status family report feelings of depression, stress and anxiety (Teranishi et al., 2015). Undocumented students are able to qualify for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which is an executive order that temporarily grants undocumented students delay in deportation, apply for a driver's license and renewable work permits (Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018; Bjorkland, 2018; Teranishi et al., 2015). This means that they might be one of the few members in their family to be considered 'legitimate' by the government and thereby allowing them to work and contribute to the family income (Terriquez & Gurantz, 2014; Gurrola, Ayón, & Salas, 2013). This status can allow undocumented students to choose to work full time due to feeling a responsibility to help out with their families' needs.

In a mixed-status family, a student's parents might not have citizenship, but younger siblings may be born in the United States (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015). Due to the United States' deportation policy, many individuals who are in mixed-status families experience the threat of separation from those with a different immigration status (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015). According to Rosenblum and Meissner (2014), this policy has resulted in various families to be under continuous levels of fear and vulnerability from deportation. This uncertainty can cause isolation and depression due to facing fear of one's own deportation along with the deportation of relatives (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015; Muñoz, 2013; Contreras, 2009). The inconsistency of citizenship within mixed-status families brings psychological obstacles including anxiety and stress that can

interfere with success in higher education.

Perception of Undocumented Students. The media's perception of undocumented students focuses on members of the Latinx population, largely due to the discussions regarding DACA (Aguirre, 2019). Additionally, a majority of the research and literature regarding undocumented students concentrate on the Latinx population (Bjorklund, 2018). But all undocumented individuals, regardless of country of origin, are affected by the same issues regarding their legal status.

According to Serna, Cohen, and Nguyen (2017), while the majority of undocumented students are from Latin American countries, it is important to also consider other demographics that represent a large number of undocumented students from other countries including Korea, Philippines, China, and India. Around 12% of the undocumented population in the United States are Asian and the numbers and country of origin of these individuals look different from state to state (Buenavista, 2016). In California, the undocumented Asian student population make up 45% of the total undocumented population who utilize Assembly Bill (AB) 540 to pay in-state tuition (University of California Office of the President Student Financial Support, 2008).

Often Asian undocumented students do not see themselves fitting the common stereotype of the undocumented student (Latinx) so that they often characterize themselves as invisible (Poon et al., 2016). They often feel isolated due to various factors including the "model minority myth" that Asian Americans are successful in society as a result of them possessing a strong, respectable work ethic, which is not the assumption given to the whole population of undocumented students (Buenavista, 2016; Gonzales, 2009). Due to this difference, they often perceive their undocumented experience to be

different from those of undocumented Latinx and are more likely to be silent about their struggles and experiences (Bjorklund, 2018).

Whether an individual fits the stereotype of what society envisions an undocumented student to be, can affect their experience in higher education. Non-Latinx undocumented students have the understanding their status is different from undocumented Latinx (Buenavista, 2016). Some take advantage of this difference but non-Latinx undocumented students are still affected positively and negatively by their status. A few of the positives for undocumented non-Latinx students are they are not likely to be profiled, are more likely to be accepted, and are not likely to be stereotyped regarding their immigration status simply based on their race (Chan, 2010). The negative experiences can include feeling invisible, and not being offered information or resources when pursuing higher education (Chan, 2010). Non-Latinx undocumented students often fall through the cracks of higher education because they are not included in the campuses' perceptions of their undocumented students. Even though the general undocumented student population share a lot of the same experiences, it is important to consider the unique challenges that different ethno-racial groups face. More research is necessary to better understand the ethno-racial differences within the undocumented student population to best serve this group.

Legal System for Undocumented Students

In the lives of undocumented students, laws and policies impact their lives beyond just their persistence in higher education. Understanding the struggles undocumented students face in order to continue in higher education is the first step student affairs professionals can help this demographic succeed (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). Several

prominent court cases have explored the intersection of educational values and where undocumented children stand in the eyes of the government. Several courts have looked to the Fourteenth Amendment to answer the question of undocumented children and their ability to receive a K-12 education to give them the opportunity to be integrated in everyday society (Lau v Nichols, 1974). Even though the courts have established that undocumented students have a constitutional right to a K-12 education this does not guarantee a positive experience with their education (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). Two influential court cases have impacted and established the standard that undocumented students have a right, along with the privilege, of an education.

One of the first court cases to be brought up to the Supreme Court around the topic of giving undocumented students and their right to a K-12 education, *Lau v. Nichols* (414 U.S. 563, 1974; Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018). In the early 1970s, a lawsuit was filed against the San Francisco Unified School District for denying services to Chinese native speaking students (Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018). San Francisco Unified School District deprived this population of the opportunity to participate in the environment of their education, the court determined that the students had been discriminated against based on their "race, color or national origin" (Lau v. Nichols, 1974). This ruling established it was necessary to support the success of non-English speaking students in education. This case impacted the field of K-12 education by ensuring support for students regardless of their origin but the findings can easily be applied to higher education.

A decade later, another case was brought to the Supreme Court that addressed the right of undocumented students to have access to a K-12 education, Plyler v. Doe (457

U.S. 202). In Texas, funds were withheld from school districts who admitted undocumented children where they had the authorization to deny undocumented children into their education system (Plyler v Doe, 1982). The judges concluded that it was unjust to restrict this population from their right of education along with inhibiting this population to be integrated within society (Plyler v Doe, 1982). These two cases together brought the value of education for children regardless of their origin, status, race and native language. Children deserve the opportunity to be educated and receive the necessary resources to be successful.

Barriers within Higher Education

The undocumented immigrant population is uniquely impacted by the decisions created by the federal government in their pursuit of higher education. Within the topic of immigration, decisions of the government such as the repeal and uncertainty about DACA protections, has affected the undocumented immigrant population's ability to plan for the future (Serna et al., 2017). Current debates over state and institutional policies for in-state resident tuition and financial aid have addressed the controversial issues that are directly impacting college affordability (Serna et al., 2017). Undocumented students have the unique challenge of navigating a series of different state-specific policies regarding their status when enrolling in college as they seek to determine if they are able to afford the cost of higher education (Serna et al., 2017). There are several critical federal, state and institutional policies that impact undocumented students' access to higher education including: in-state tuition, financial aid, and the psychological barriers impacting undocumented students' access to higher education.

In-state Resident Tuition. Studies have looked at the challenges undocumented students face within higher education, one of them being that of affordability. Some states have passed legislation to make tuition affordable for undocumented students (Serna et al., 2017). Along with the legislation, those states have also allocated state managed financial aid to provide assistance where the cost of college is high for those at the in-state tuition rate (Serna et al., 2017). The challenge remains in that undocumented students have to navigate policies that differ from state to state along with institutions in order to determine if the cost of higher education is affordable to them as undocumented students (Serna et al., 2017). The number of states that are providing in-state tuition to undocumented students is rising, however some states have recently repealed their policy of providing this benefit or specified by legislation that undocumented students are ineligible for it (Serna et al., 2017). With the lack of access to state and federal aid for undocumented students, some undocumented students find no worth in working towards a college degree (Serna et al, 2017).

Approximately 17 states have taken steps to affect access to in-state tuition for undocumented students (Serna et al., 2017). To qualify for in-state tuition depends on different factors state-to-state but many determine in-state status using the duration of residency in the state, attendance at an in-state high school, graduation, and the intention of applying for residency (Serna et al., 2017). Virginia, for example, bases their qualifications for in-state tuition for undocumented students on if the student is covered by Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and also at the discretion of the Attorney General (Serna et al., 2017). In Colorado, the state initially banned providing in-state tuition for undocumented students in 2008, but that ban was revoked in 2013 (Serna

et al., 2017). The federal government has sent mixed messages on the issue as they used legislative budget rules to provide in-state tuition for undocumented students in 2009 but later revoked those rules in 2011 (Serna et al., 2017). Texas and New York have both had a longer timeline with providing in-state tuition for undocumented students but are preparing to re-debate this issue (Serna et al., 2017).

Other states, such as Florida and Tennessee, have also explored the idea of how to serve undocumented students in their own higher education systems (Serna et al., 2017). In Florida, undocumented students who have attended three consecutive years of high school in the state and applied to college within 2 years of graduation qualify for in-state tuition (Serna et al., 2017). While Tennessee failed by one vote to pass in-state tuition for undocumented students, it did provide an option for students who are citizens and whose parents are undocumented to qualify (Serna et al., 2017). Overall, several states have considered the issue of granting in-state tuition for undocumented students, but the inconsistency of policies remains a challenge for those students in identifying possible institutions to enroll.

Financial Aid. Almost every native student who is planning to go to college has the reassurance of applying for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to receive grants, scholarships and loans (Serna et al., 2017). When applying for federal financial aid, the applicant must provide a valid social security number (SSN) to verify citizenship. Various federal agencies check the parent's social security number, income and taxes as part of the verification process (Serna et al., 2017). Since verifying SSNs is part of the financial aid process, undocumented students are unable to provide this information and as a result are unable to participate in the programs (Serna et al., 2017).

Even undocumented students who are approved to be in the country under DACA regulations are not eligible to apply for federal financial aid, but there are six states that offer financial assistance to these individuals: Texas, New Mexico, California, Colorado, Minnesota and Washington (Serna et al., 2017). Each state has different requirements to qualify for in-state financial aid, such as duration of residency, high school attendance in the state, graduation, and the intent to apply for lawful immigration status (Serna et al., 2017).

Texas was the first states to grant undocumented students state financial aid through their program called the TEXAS (Toward Excellence, Access & Success) grant (Serna et al., 2017). To qualify for the grant, an applicant simply needed to be a state resident which undocumented students were able to qualify for residency if they met the requirements of: completing a general educational development (GED) certificate or graduating with a high school diploma, been a resident to the state for at least three years, and intent to apply for legal residency status (Serna et al., 2017). In New Mexico, the state legislature passed a bill granting financial aid to undocumented students who met the requirements of attending a secondary educational institution in New Mexico for at minimum one year and completing a general educational development (GED) certificate or graduating with a high school diploma from a New Mexico high school (Serna et al., 2017). Arizona, however, has taken a stance to restrict undocumented students from any state financial assistance (Serna et al., 2017). Geographic location can significantly limit opportunities for undocumented students if the state in which they reside does not provide some sort of financial assistance. Overall, the grey areas of financial assistance are a challenge for undocumented students on their journey navigating higher education.

Psychological Barriers. Undocumented students face unique challenges that empower them to have psychological resilience, perseverance, and optimism (Perez, 2010). The situation coming from a household where English is not the native language and neither parent had the experience of going to college is not uncommon (Oliverez, 2006). Undocumented students tend to be more self-sufficient due to their unique circumstances (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). This includes developing fear of deportation, the transition to the concept of being "undocumented" and facing discrimination on-campus. It is important to recognize the challenges these students experience and how this impacts their psychological well-being as they progress in higher education.

Transition to what is "undocumented." At a certain point in time, an undocumented student will have to come to terms with their status as undocumented and how that will affect their ability to make their future goals come true (Gonzales, 2009). Some students first realize their status once they start the process of applying to colleges while other experience it when applying for jobs, or a driver's license where government issued identification is needed to complete the process (Oliverez, 2007). Once realizing their status, this awareness can highlight the unequal access to higher education and limitations for their future (Pérez Huber & Malagon, 2007). This can lead to lower expectations in academic attainment and aspirations (Abrego, 2006; Flores, 2010). After getting to their last years of high school, some undocumented students give up their ambition to go to college once they realize the future challenges they will face (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010). Every undocumented student has a different journey with their transition to undocumented status where they come to realize how this identity will impact their journey to the future.

Deportation: Isolation, Anxiety, Stress and Fear. The worst fear and situation to avoid for an undocumented student is the possibility of their family being torn a part due to their legal status. The issue of deportation is a sensitive topic especially currently due to the political climate and the continuous change of policies that uniquely affect these undocumented individuals. A vast number of undocumented students and their families tend to live in hiding due to the fear of being deported (Chan, 2010). A study conducted by Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (2014) found that 75% of their undocumented undergraduate participants reported worrying about being deported while 55.9% personally knew someone who has been deported. Many of their participants felt high levels of anxiety that were above the clinical definition of anxiety (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015).

At an early age, these students learn to not disclose their status to individuals outside of their family (Chan, 2010). For undocumented students, the safer option is to not expose one's status and face the possibility to be deported to a country they barely know (Chan, 2010; Abrego & Gonzales, 2010). Some undocumented students are instructed by their parents to never tell anyone about their legal status, even to teachers or counselors (Enriquez, 2011). According to Chan (2010), undocumented students have an emotional circumstance: "they're torn, they're fighting every day in ways no one can understand, hoping they don't lose their family, their friends, their home" (p. 31). By keeping quiet, they ensure safety and that no misfortune will come their way (Chan, 2010).

By not knowing who they can openly discuss their legal status with, undocumented students can feel more isolated on their campuses compared to their native

and documented peers. Undocumented students can find it difficult to openly discuss their status with others not only because of the threat of deportation, but some professionals in higher education feel uncomfortable discussing the topic of a student's documentation status (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). Students can question who they are able to trust or confide in with regards to their legal status which often closes opportunities for support that they could have academically (Muñoz, 2013). Due to their legal status, undocumented students' struggle with inclusion at their campus and being successful while lacking a connection to their institution (Muñoz, 2013). This is especially true if there is an absence of a visible undocumented student population on their campus as they are more inclined to hide themselves and not be open about expressing their identity (Muñoz, 2013). Due to the lack of support from institutions and professionals, undocumented students report feeling isolated from the campus community and the resources that could support them in their educational journey (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015).

Even though undocumented students face a number of challenges, they develop resilience and determination to achieve their goals in higher education (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). They possess strengths that include motivation, optimism and hope that keep them inspired to create a future for themselves (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). The hurdles they face allow them to be determined in making their dreams become a reality. A study conducted by Enriquez (2011) interviewed undocumented students with their struggles in higher education where one explained "one of the reasons why I feel that we are doing well is because we feel the pressure and we also feel the support. And the support is what's keeping us pushing forward" (pg. 491). Even though the thought of

deportation is common among undocumented students, this fuels their motivation to succeed and empower them to pursue a college education (Muñoz, 2013).

Discrimination/Campus Climate. After the 2016 presidential elections, schools across the country have reported increased incidents of harassment of bullying towards students who are undocumented (Crawford & Hairston, 2018). The election, and subsequent changes in federal policy, has reinforced the stigma of documentation status where undocumented students do not feel comfortable sharing their status. In a study conducted by Lauby (2017), the data noted that undocumented students are first confronted with discrimination from their status in the education setting. In addition, some undocumented students have experienced rejection from their school administrators, which include financial aid advisors, due to not having a social security number which results in these students not getting the support that they need (Lauby, 2017). Other articles have reported undocumented students experience high levels of mistreatment by college counselors, campus police and faculty because of their legal status (Teranishi et al., 2014).

There have been reports of undocumented students being treated differently depending on their enrollment at 4-year or 2-year institutions. Students who attended a 4-year institution were more likely to report feeling a higher level of unfairness by their peers and student affairs professionals compared to students who attended a 2-year institution (Teranishi et al., 2014). Undocumented students who attended a 2-year institution have reported higher levels of negative experiences specifically from financial aid advisors (Teranishi et al., 2014). This can be addressed by training student affairs professionals receive along with the size of the undocumented student population and

how it is different between the two types of institution. Student affairs professionals need to recognize the negative experiences undocumented students face from their peers and how they can utilize our role to give them the resources they need to be successful in higher education (Lauby, 2017).

Support for Undocumented Students

Two bills have been brought to Congress to give undocumented students the way to citizenship and residency (Diaz-Strong, Gomez, Luna-Duarte & Meiners, 2011). In 2001, the first bill to be brought to Congress was the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act to grant undocumented students the opportunity to attend an institution along with to being given residency status for those who came to the U.S. as minors but this first attempt did not garner sufficient support to pass into law (Barron, 2011; Muñoz, 2013). This bill would have allowed undocumented students to be granted conditional residency and, once meeting specific requirements, permanent residency (Diaz-Strong & Meiners, 2007). Altered versions of the bill with the same motives were reintroduced to Congress in 2010 which failed to pass (Barron, 2011; Gonzales, 2016; Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018). The unsuccessful attempts have negatively impacted undocumented students with their access to college and not being able to fully participate in society (Bjorkland, 2018). In 2012, President Obama initiated the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order to create a temporary solution for undocumented students (Cebulko, 2013).

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). President Obama created the executive order, DACA, which followed several of the same guidelines from the DREAM Act (Bjorkland, 2018). DACA allowed qualified undocumented students to

temporarily delay deportation, and in some states, apply for a driver's license and receive a temporary social security number which allows the opportunity to have renewable work permits (Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018; Teranishi et al., 2015). The executive order focused on educational attainment as a condition to be eligible along with the completion of a high school diploma, passing the GED, or to be currently enrolled in school (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017). Additional requirements include proof of arrival to the U.S. before the age of 16 and having resided in the U.S for the past 5 consecutive years (Gonzales, Terriquez & Ruszcyk, 2014). DACA has increased employment rates among undocumented college graduates and given them the ability to build credit from opening bank accounts (Batalova, Hooker, Capps, & Bachmeier, 2014). Even though DACA does not offer a path to legalization or citizenship it does offer those who qualify to contribute to their future and society (Gonzales et al., 2014). In 2014, Obama expanded DACA and extended the age eligibility to integrate an additional 30,000 people (Pérez, 2014; Teranishi et al., 2015).

DACA has been influential for undocumented students to gain access to opportunities that include jobs, internships, higher wages, driver's licenses, and, depending on the state, financial benefits (Teranishi et al., 2015). DACA has provided meaning for their recipients from the opportunities it has opened to them while impacting their emotional wellbeing. According to Teranishi et al. (2015), DACA recipients have reported feeling a sense of belonging on their campus, which has influenced them to be more involved in their campus community (Teranishi et al., 2015). In addition, DACA recipients have reported feeling less shameful of their documentation status and reduced sense of stigma (Teranishi et al., 2015). DACA recipients have reported feeling lowered

fears of deportation and improved well-being from experiencing less stress (Teranishi et al., 2015). DACA has provided a glimmer of hope for undocumented students to be able to make their aspirations become a reality from the open opportunities (Teranishi et al., 2015).

DACA has positively impacted undocumented students on their education and their development (Teranishi et al., 2015). With DACA, recipients were more likely to hold an internship compared to non-DACA students and have better access to transportation (Teranishi et al., 2015). Instead of having to rely on public transportation, DACA recipients are able to obtain a driver's license which can ease the travel of their commute to campus (Teranishi et al., 2015). Additionally, depending on the state they resided DACA recipients were eligible to receive state health care (Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018). For many recipients, DACA has impacted undocumented students to keep moving forward with opportunities.

Even though DACA has positively impacted undocumented students with their access to education, in practice it has several weak points. One negative is the inconsistency of how DACA is implemented across the country and how a "wide variety of higher education policies range from relatively inclusionary to highly exclusionary (Gonzales, 2009)" (Teranishi et al., 2015, p. 1). Several studies have looked into states who have a negative stance toward undocumented immigrants, which can either positively or negatively impact DACA recipients (Cebulko & Silver, 2016). An undocumented student might either have to pay in-state or out-of-state tuition depending on the state they reside as a DACA recipient. Another weak point is the number of DACA eligible individuals who did not apply with 43% of undocumented individuals in

the US applied and were given DACA status (Gonzales, 2016; Hipsman, Gomez-Aguinaga & Capps, 2016). A large reason could be undocumented students not being informed of DACA, the process of applying and the cost associated with the application (Gonzales, 2016). Even though the implementation of DACA has positively impacted several undocumented students across the country, there are some weak points where it does not reach the full potential.

Employment. The biggest advantage of DACA is giving undocumented individuals the ability to receive a work permit (Teranishi et al., 2015). Receiving a temporary social security number opens several opportunities of employment for DACA students that would not exist if they did not have a social security number. There are situations for several DACA recipients where they are the only person in their family who is authorized and legally able to work which increases both the pressure and responsibility for them to help support their family (Gurrola et al., 2013). DACA recipients were more likely to have paid work experience prior to college compared to the non-DACA students and they are able to be employed in positions that were more appropriate to their skill set compared to the previous low-skilled jobs they held before obtaining the work permit (Teranishi et al., 2015). The low skilled jobs they were limited to provided little flexibility for school or other needs where DACA allowed them to concentrate on their coursework and have the opportunity to hold a job that is related to their career choice (Teranishi et al., 2015).

Another area that DACA has opened for undocumented students are internships that require a work permit and social security number. Teranishi et al. 2015, found half of their participants have received pay from their internship, which is a requirement for their

degree. Holding an internship is crucial in STEM related majors which can help in finding jobs after graduation (Teranishi et al., 2015). Being able to hold an internship is key for a student's professional development to provide the opportunity to develop skills that will prepare them in their career (Teranishi et al., 2015).

In 2017, DACA was set to be repealed by the Trump administration until a few federal judges ruled against the President's action (Bjorkland, 2018). Even though the DACA repeal has been temporarily stopped, the future of DACA is still uncertain as is how this stance will impact the lives of undocumented students. The opportunity of DACA has given many undocumented students important rites of passage where without it they will be excluded from influential milestones (Abrego, 2006; Gonzales, 2009). According to Hooker, McHugh & Mathay (2015), "DACA has reactivated the educational dreams and aspirations of many incentivizing them to return to school and potentially transition to higher education" (Cisneros & Cardenas, 2017, p. 190). If structural paths for undocumented students are not created to help them gain access to higher education or citizenship, then they will always be uncertain of their aspirations regardless of their academic performance (Abrego, 2006; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015).

Support Network. Most undocumented students come from a collectivistic culture where family is an important motivator with accomplishing their educational goals (Goldberg, Kelly, Matthews, Kang, Li, & Sumaroka, 2012; Torres & Solberg, 2001). A group of people, family or friends, to utilize as a support network is essential for the success of not just an undocumented student but for every college student. A support network can be found in various forms but the most common type of network for undocumented students are family, peers and teachers (Enriquez, 2011). Enriquez (2011)

found the family is the dominant form of emotional support for undocumented students in providing them encouragement and motivation to do well in their academics. A large motivation piece to persist in their education is to repay their parents for the sacrifices they have made and taking advantage of the educational opportunities that their parents could not receive (Enriquez, 2011). Most importantly, these students feel a strong need to make their families proud of their success (Allen-Handy & Farinde-Wu, 2018). In other cases, undocumented students rely on their siblings or extended family members for guidance on navigating higher education if other resources are not perceived to be beneficial (Lauby, 2017).

According to a couple studies, positive peer relationships have been found to improve academic performance and allow students the opportunity to establish a support network they can utilize during their college experience (Conchas, 2006; Stanton-Salazar, 2001). Friends are a form of social capital undocumented students are able to use beyond the classroom as well as in their future educational goals (Enriquez, 2011). Enriquez (2011) found undocumented peers were a critical resource for relaying information and helping students learn about tactics and resources that would benefit their experience. According to Enriquez (2011), undocumented students received help from someone who they did not know personally but often is an undocumented student involved in the same social community.

Undocumented students were able to develop their own social capital, limited as it is, by helping others who are in a similar position in order to successfully navigate higher education (Enriquez, 2011). Especially in the undocumented community, these students empower each other to keep pushing forward and passing that support on to others

(Enriquez, 2011). Furthermore, teachers have also played a crucial role in encouraging undocumented students with applying to college and helping with the admissions' process (Enriquez, 2011). For several undocumented students, the role of their mentor was a major factor for them either persisting in K-12 or applying to college (Contreras, 2009). Regardless of the resources provided on the education level, the support network of an undocumented student has an influential role for their educational success.

On-Campus Services. Prior research has indicated that undocumented students avoid connecting to other social groups if they perceive they are not welcome due to their legal status (Garcia & Tierney, 2011). Research from Tinto (as cited in Muñoz, 2013) supports the student's ability to develop a connection towards their institution's culture and feel included on their campus is crucial for them to be successful academically. A number of researchers question the ability for undocumented students to feel included on their campus due to their status and the challenges they face from the associated social stigma (Muñoz, 2013). Campus resources can give undocumented students the opportunity to build a sense of community and support in an environment where their experiences are validated and are seen as valuable (Yosso, 2006). Resources undocumented students were more likely to use on their campus were diversity offices and selective staff due to the connections they are able to make from these services (Mendoza, 2008). Services that go beyond academic support with their approach of helping undocumented students makes a difference with their experience in higher education.

Organizations. Undocumented students face unique challenges on their campus where safe spaces and organizations can provide an outlet for this population to feel

protected. According to Enriquez (2011), participants viewed their undocumented student organization on their campus as a second family they can connect and rely on due to the relationship they build with their peers in the organization and the connection they develop from their shared experiences and status. One undocumented student organization used a "mentoring tactic" of connecting a new member to a smaller group of undocumented students that go to their institution (Enriquez, 2011). These small groups had the responsibility to take care and use each other as a resource (Enriquez, 2011).

As Enriquez (2011) explained, "seeing supportive non-familial individuals as family allowed them to contextualize and embrace the unconditional support provided by these individuals" (p. 494). Student led organizations allow the opportunity for undocumented students to receive the assistance they might not be able to get from their family due to their family members not being familiar with the educational system (Enriquez, 2011). Undocumented students tend to question who they can trust with disclosing their status on their campus and student led organizations often give them the opportunity to feel safe (Muñoz, 2013). By educating undocumented students, these student-led organizations on their campus show that they can receive the support they need to be empowered from their community and "build up their shared undocumented cultural wealth" (p. 495).

Safe Space. A study conducted by Teranishi et al. (2015) reported 73.1% of their undocumented participants have either used a safe space, organization, or center to receive support by sharing their experiences. Other research has found 85% of undocumented students on a college campus who used a safe space reported the support of the organization has been or is very important (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015). Not all

undocumented students are fortunate to have a space or a designated center but among those who do not, they have provided the recommendation to have a safe space on campus (Teranishi et al., 2015). Some wish to have a space simply to feel safe on their institution's campus and to not feel targeted from the outside world while others suggested that the existence of such a space can provide a symbol to signal it is safe to discuss their status in a given space along with the administrators who post it (Teranishi et al., 2015). By providing a safe space and organizations, undocumented students can have a place to connect to others and share their experiences with those who can understand them.

Dreamers Resource Center. Campus services have an important role of supporting students with their educational experiences and attainment. Several centers across the country are available specifically for undocumented students to get the support they need such as Dreamer Resource Centers. Dreamer Resource Centers are "designed to develop awareness and knowledge of undocumented student issues, policies and history, while providing a community of academic, professional, and personal support to empower and promote the success of undocumented students and students from mixed-status families" (California State University, Sacramento, 2019). States with higher enrollment of undocumented students, such as California has approximately 72,300 undocumented students enrolled in their public universities and community colleges and they have identified the need to provide support services for this demographic (Gordon, 2017). In 2014, California State University - Fullerton was one of the first California institutions to create a center to provide inclusion and support for undocumented students by providing a dedicated physical space, the Titan Dreamers Resource Center (TDRC),

where undocumented students could meet peers and feel a sense of belonging on their campus (California State University, Fullerton, 2018). The TDRC provides workshops and programs to assist undocumented students with their college experience which include: individual support applying to state and institutional financial aid, immigration attorney assistance, access to counseling services, help with AB 540 Form, and California DREAM Act applications (Kuroki & Preciado, 2018). They also host ally trainings for faculty and staff to be educated of the experiences and needs of undocumented students (Kuroki & Preciado, 2018).

"Dreamer Resource Centers" and other similar programs allow the identification of allies, who are often student affairs professionals, which undocumented students can reach out to for assistance within their education journey (Cisneros and Cadenas, 2017). Student affairs professionals have a critical role for undocumented students as they seek information and support navigating their status regarding financial aid and career opportunities (Contreras, 2009; Muñoz & Maldonado, 2012; Perez, Muñoz, Alcantar, & Guarneros, 2011). Centers specifically for undocumented student have established connections to resources and professionals that can best assist them with the most up to date information. At the University of California- Berkeley, a program called the Undocumented Student Program was created where undocumented students can meet counselors who are specifically trained to navigate their college experience on their campus along with free legal support (Sanchez & So, 2015). After two years of the program they have served over 96% of their undocumented students on the campus reaching more than 380 students (Sanchez & So, 2015). The visibility of these services

impacts the undocumented student population by showing their campus is an ally and that they are there to support them (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017).

Development Education for Student Affairs Professionals

The precollege experiences for undocumented students frames the meaning of college differently compared to their documented peers (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Some of the precollege experiences include the context of family and previous academic accomplishments and challenges (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Understanding the precollege experiences of undocumented students is important for student affairs professionals to empower and help these students with navigating higher education. Taking the initiative to learn more about what education professionals can do to support undocumented students to succeed is an important element of advocating to meet the needs of these students. Each subfield of student affairs has an influential role with helping undocumented students in pre-enrollment experiences including admissions, orientation, and financial aid to services on campus once students enroll (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Student affairs professionals have an influential role shaping their practice to the needs of all of their student and to be well-informed of the struggles of this demographic is necessary in order for them to persist in higher education (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010).

Admissions and Outreach. The interactions between the students and student affairs professionals can have a direct impact on whether students choose to stay or leave the university (Tinto, 1975). It's important for student affairs professionals who work within admissions and recruitment to acknowledge the relationship between the student's precollege experiences and background to connect them to the services that can assist

them through their college journey (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010; Tinto, 1975). By knowing how to work with undocumented students and developing a skillset to work with this specific population, student affairs professionals can make a significant difference (Gildersleeve et al., 2010). Burkhardt et al. (2011) (as cited in Muñoz, 2018) found around 10% of student affair professionals in admissions and registrar were uncertain about their admission policies or not informed about the new methods the university has taken in place to specifically to assist undocumented students.

Status Terms. Status terms in higher education revolve around the legal status of the student (Mouris, 2018). Especially for undocumented students, this is a grey area where misinformation is a likely situation in several application processes such as financial aid and undergraduate admission (Mouris, 2018). Student affairs professionals need to be well informed of the terms that relate to undocumented students and the differences that they indicate (Mouris, 2018). Differentiating the terms of documented, international, illegal immigrant, and an undocumented student is important due to possible identity intersection with also being a member of a minority population or status such as first-generation (Abrego, 2008). By knowing the differences student affairs professionals are able to help undocumented student in an efficient manner and give the best possible support.

It has been shown that student affairs professionals have lacked the knowledge of the differences between the various terms to best help undocumented students in processes that relate to their legal status (Valenzuela, Perez, Perez, Montiel, & Chaparro, 2015). Specifically, professionals working in the areas of admissions and financial aid need to be well educated about how to help undocumented students regarding how to

appropriately fill out applications related to their status (Valenzuela et al, 2015). There is a possibility to misinform undocumented students with their college application which can affect their candidacy (Valenzuela et al., 2015). Acknowledging the demographic of your student population attending the university you work and specializing your knowledge by adjusting your "techniques" such as advising or counseling style can benefit these students (Bensimon, 2007).

Financial Aid. External factors that go beyond the context of academics can also impact a student's decision to leave or stay at their university (Tinto, 1975). Undocumented students face unique external factors regarding legal policies changing and how this can affect their future attending higher education (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Changing legal policies and guidelines on the state and federal levels have impacting certain subfields of student affairs, specifically financial aid (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Burkhardt et al. (2011) (as cited in Mouris, 2018) found around 17% of financial aid advisors were not informed of the changes within financial aid that specifically impact undocumented students on their campus. For financial aid professionals, it is important to be competent about how the external factors of politics and immigration policies can create barriers for undocumented students and their ability to persist in higher education (Mouris, 2018). Student affairs professionals who are knowledgeable of these barriers are better able to build trust with undocumented students that the institution will assist them properly in order to receive the support they need (Gildersleeve et al., 2010).

Institutional Support. It's important as student affairs professionals to take the initiative of staying up to date with the challenges college students face today. One of

most important challenges is learning more about the challenges that are specific to certain demographic populations and how best to serve them (Mouris, 2018). Unfortunately, many institutions provide little direction on how their professionals can best serve undocumented students in the different programs and services that make up student affairs including financial aid, academic advising and career counseling (Barnhardt, Ramos & Reyes, 2013). The lack of direction and clarity from an institution in regard to campus policies related to governmental immigration policies can impact student affairs professionals being motivated to properly work with undocumented students (Barnhardt et al., 2013).

Providing development opportunities to student affairs professionals can play a significant role in how they meet the needs of undocumented students (Mouris, 2018). If not a priority of the institution, student affairs professionals may not acquire the necessary skills to fully support undocumented students dealing with those laws and policies that uniquely impact their experience in higher education (Mouris, 2018). Mouris (2018) explains, "if the organization does not hold student affairs professionals accountable to ensure that they have the skills necessary to better support undocumented students, there is a high likelihood that they will not acquire them on their own" (p. 45).

Ally Training. Several institutions have taken different approaches to educate their professionals on how to best support undocumented students (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017). At a public institution in Arizona, they developed a training called "DREAMzone" to give the opportunity for faculty and practitioners to learn how to advocate along with gaining the knowledge to best assist undocumented students (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017). The professional development training is a four-hour training that encompasses different

learning outcomes: awareness of one's opinions, learning laws and policies applicable to undocumented students, and how to best work with undocumented students (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017). The trainings are hosted by either allies or undocumented students where participants receive direct contact with individuals who are a part of the undocumented community (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017). This helps the development with the professional's cultural competence and to self-reflect how they currently support undocumented students (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017).

At California State University, Fullerton take a similar approach with providing opportunities for others to learn about undocumented students. Fullerton provides an ally training for their faculty and staff to ensure undocumented students on their campus will receive support both in and out of the classroom (Kuroki & Preciado, 2018). Another California State University institution incorporated a course where student affairs professionals and counseling staff on their campus teach undocumented students on how they can navigate college (Southern, 2016). At University of California, Berkeley they facilitate one of the largest training called UndocuAlly Training (Sanchez & So, 2015). The success of the program has been implemented across all ten University of California institutions to give the opportunity for professionals to best support undocumented students (Sanchez & So, 2015). This program introduces terms such as 'undocually', 'undocupeer', and 'undocuqueer' which created labels identifying how different identities and roles intersect with the undocumented student population. Being an ally can be represented in different forms for student affairs professionals where educating or learning from others can help the approach with serving undocumented students.

Professionals who work in higher education should be trained on the needs of

undocumented students which includes history, legal issues, and current information on the state and federal level (Perez, 2010). Institutions who provide these professional development opportunities help create a welcoming environment for undocumented students (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017). It shows in a bold statement the institution supports these students and shows their commitment towards their success at their campus (Pérez et al., 2011). By an institution demonstrating their support, it affirms their value in diversity and helping their student population (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

When looking at the situation of student affairs professionals supporting college students there are two roles working together. The professional and the student work together to achieve a goal, which in most cases is helping the student graduating in a four-year time frame. Complex situations tend to arise for undocumented students where it is important to look at the position of the professional in relation to the student. Schlossberg's theory of transition and Sanford's challenge of support will be used in interpreting the findings for this study.

Schlossberg's theory of transition. Schlossberg's transition theory studies the transition process of individuals and how they cope during the process using the 4 "S's": self, support, strategies and situation (Schlossberg, 2011). The Transition Model's strength is that is allows the model to be used with different types of transitions, allows comprehension of transitions, and demonstrates how individuals endure the transitions (Schlossberg, 2011). Different types of transitions happen in life and can be expected or unexpected but include graduation, marriage, new job, injury, mental health, car accident, or death in the family (Schlossberg, 2011). For many undocumented students, these

challenges are unexpected and out of their control. Transition has the possibility of impacting one's life and the people surrounding the individual (Schlossberg, 2011). It can be overwhelming to process a transition and Schlossberg's 4 "S's" can be helpful to bring a deeper understanding of the situation (Schlossberg, 2011).

The Transition Model focuses on the 4 "S's": self, support, strategies and situation to examine how an individual manages any transition in life (Schlossberg, 2011). The first "S" addresses the individual's Situation at the moment of the transition (Schlossberg, 2011). Looking at the time of transition, there are factors to consider such as triggers, timing, control, role change, duration, and stresses (Schlossberg, 2011; Patton, Renn, Guido & Quaye, 2016). The current state of the individual and the transition presented can have an impact how one processes the transition at the given moment (Patton et al., 2016; Schlossberg, 2011).

The second "S" refers to the Self and the personal characteristics of the individual such as demographic descriptors (Patton et al., 2016; Schlossberg, 2011). Characteristics of the self, such as if the individual is optimistic, has grit or inner strength to cope with the transition helps to determine if they are more or less likely to prosper (Schlossberg, 2011). An individual who is able to be more positive in a situation will process the transition better compared with one who focuses on the negatives (Schlossberg, 2011). Other factors of the Self include psychological factors, health, culture, values and ethnicity which are possible elements that can impact how the individual operates (Patton et al., 2016).

The third "S" is Support, which focuses on the type of support the individual receives at the time of the transition (Schlossberg, 2011; Patton et al., 2016). Receiving

support during a time of transition is crucial for one's health and their ability to process during a transition (Schlossberg, 2011). Different types of support that can be given during a transition includes relationships, family, friends, and stability with the methods of support (Patton et al., 2016). The impact of student affairs professionals may be a key factor in the type of support received by undocumented students on campus.

Finally, the last "S" examines the Strategies the individual uses to cope with the transition (Schlossberg, 2011; Patton et al., 2016). Depending on the coping strategies the individual uses will determine how one will cope with the transition (Schlossberg, 2011). This includes handling stress, changing, and controlling the meaning of the situation (Patton et al., 2016). Overall, the Transition Model helps to bring understanding of one's experience with their transition (Schlossberg, 2011). The model analyses the type of transition, the amount of change, the individual's current situation and the coping strategies that will impact the individual's experience with transition (Schlossberg, 2011).

Schlosberg's Transition theory is applicable with student affairs professionals who work closely with undocumented students. Following the 4 "S", it allows the student affairs professional to recognize the undocumented student's self, situation, strategies and support needed for their transition. For the student affairs professionals, it can bring a deeper understanding of the undocumented student's situation (Schlossberg, 2011). Through this pivotal transition it is helpful to utilize this framework when collaborating with undocumented student's journey in higher education.

Sanford's Challenge and Support. The student affairs professional's role in higher education is to provide support to the student while also encouraging appropriate challenges to help the student develop. Challenge refers circumstances where the student

does not have the necessary skills to cope with the situation (Sanford, 1967a). When a challenge is presented to a college student, it requires them to change their behavior and further grow in their development (Sanford, 1962). Support is a direct component in that it helps with the student's ability to be successful with the challenge (Sanford, 1967a). Depending on support that is given from the student affairs professional through a challenge will influence the amount of growth achieved by the student (Boehman, 2010). For development to happen there should be a balanced amount of challenge and support that is appropriate to the situation (Boehman, 2010).

If there is too much support or too little challenge, the student will lack motivation for change as well as unproductivity (Boehman, 2010). If there is too much challenge and not enough support, the student will retreat from the situation and not make any positive change (Boehman, 2010). Challenges are part of the experience in higher education where the student affairs professional should be mindful with how they support undocumented students in these situations (Bohan, 2019). By understanding the balance between the challenge and giving an appropriate amount of support student affairs professionals can support undocumented students more effectively.

Even though Sanford's challenge and support is a simplistic theory, its relevant for student affairs professionals to promote in their individual practice when working with undocumented students. Acknowledging the balance between challenge and support can make difference in a student's development (Sanford, 1967b). Student affairs professionals using this theory are able to comprehend how to challenge an undocumented student while also giving the appropriate amount of support. This is a helpful framework to guide the student affairs professional's role when supporting

undocumented student's experience in higher education.

Summary

Undocumented students face unique challenges in their higher education experience. Some of the issues they confront revolve around financial affordability, potential discrimination, and anxiety from the potential of their family members or themselves of being deported. Behind every undocumented student there is a story that describes a reason for their family to immigrate to the United States. In most cases, their parents dreamed of receiving a better future (Kuroki & Preciado, 2018). Even with these aspirations, undocumented students encounter complex circumstances where the role of the student affairs professional becomes vital to their success. For those who dedicated their individual practice to serving undocumented students, they have developed tactics and strategies to best support this population. It is important to learn from these professionals and the approaches they find valuable with supporting undocumented students in their higher education journey.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

The chapter outlines the methodology that has taken place with this study. This study employed a qualitative approach by utilizing descriptive research. This approach is designed to get a deeper understanding of participant's experiences and thoughts regarding the methods used by student affairs professionals who specifically serve undocumented students and how they support this population. Themes were drawn from the interviews to highlight key areas of importance in supporting undocumented students in higher education.

Design of Study

The study utilized a qualitative descriptive research approach that entailed personal interviews with four student affairs professionals from different institutions across the United States. By conducting a qualitative descriptive study, it allowed the individuals involved in the study to discuss details and information about specific events they have experienced (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). It focused on the description of distinct experiences of the individual and the phenomenon of how it happened (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). Each individual invited to participate was a student affairs professional who was working with undocumented students as part of an office, program, or center dedicated to serving this population at the time of the study. Participants were employed in different areas of student affairs, but their primary focus was on working directly with undocumented students.

The interviews focused on the work of the student affairs professionals and how they were supporting undocumented students in their individual practice and what they

perceived the challenges that this population faces in higher education. Questions included general information about the participant's institution and their institution's approach to supporting undocumented students. Interviews were done over the phone with participants and took approximately one hour depending on the answers from the participants.

Participants

Participants in this study were four student affairs professionals who work with undocumented students as the primary focus of their professional position. Four public institutions with an undocumented student resource center which specifically serves undocumented students were identified and the senior staff member listed were invited to either participate in the study or recommend another professional from their center to participate. The researcher identified the institutions with established centers from a website, undocuresourcecenters.com, which lists various institution's undocumented student resources centers across the United States.

Due to the participants' personal experiences and the type of work their position entails, the researcher chose to aggregate this information in order to more fully protect anonymity of the participants and the institutions that they serve. Participant demographic information is presented in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants and Institutions (N = 4)

	n	%
Gender		
Male	2	50.0

Female	2	50.0
Race		
Latinx	3	75.0
White	1	25.0
Institution Location		
Western	3	75.0
Southwest	1	25.0
Type of Institution		
Large Public Research	3	75.0
Large Public	1	25.0
Type of Center		
Multicultural Affairs	3	75.0
Student Services	1	25.0

An email invitation was sent to the identified student affairs professional explaining the study and inviting the student affairs professional to participate in the study. Participants who agreed to participate were provided with a consent form and were informed that their participation was voluntary. The consent form entailed to the participant indicated that they could withdraw at any point during the interview. Once the participant volunteered to be involved with the study, they were additionally asked for permission to be audio recorded.

Research Site

The researcher sites were four public higher education institutions that have an

established resource center dedicated to serving undocumented students on their campus. The institutions were identified from the website, undocuresourcecenters.com. The senior student affairs professional from the center was contacted for an interview in order to ensure that the participant would have the necessary knowledge of the challenges undocumented students face as well as strategies and concerns with supporting this population at their institution.

Instrument

Semi-structured interviews. Over the telephone semi-structured interviews were utilized to collect the data. By using semi-structured interviews, it allowed for more in-depth information to be obtained from the experiences or perspectives of the participants (Nassaji, 2015). According to Delgado-Romero, Singh and De Los Santos (2018), "qualitative research is conducted to develop concepts that can help people understand phenomena in natural settings, understand meanings, experiences, and views from the perspectives of those who have direct, immediate experience with it" (p. 320). In addition, interviews are designed to construct answers and use follow-up questions if the researcher needs more clarification about an answer (Fraenkel, Wallen, Hyun, 2015).

Questions addressed the support that is given to undocumented students from the participant's individual practice, participant's institution, and areas to improve to meet the needs of undocumented students (refer to Appendix C). The development of the interview protocol focused on introductory questions at the beginning of the interview to build rapport with the participant for them feel comfortable and open with their responses throughout the interview. The questions progressed to more perceptive topics such as

institutional support, campus climate, and challenges with supporting undocumented student (refer to Appendix C).

Researcher-as-instrument. Rather than administering a survey, the researcher facilitates questions making themselves the instrument. The researcher is an important part of the overall study process where separation is not achievable (Galdas, 2017). From the researcher facilitating the interviews, the researcher must build rapport with the participant for information to be shared within the process (Levitt, Motulsky, Wertz, Morrow,& Ponterotto, 2017). The rapport of the researcher and participant is vital for accurate statements to be shared from the participants to make the overall study accurate (Levitt et al., 2017). The researcher needs to be self-reflective with their preconceptions through the how the data is collected, evaluated and written (Galdas, 2017).

As an individual who has undocumented relatives, I have seen the challenges this population faces and their inability to progress in the United States. I have relatives who are navigating higher education as a DACA student where these personal experiences can create bias when facilitating this study. To combat this, the technique of bracketing to mitigate preconceptions from my personal experiences (Carpenter, 2007). This technique was utilized to ensure that as the researcher, I put aside my beliefs and remained as open as possible when collecting data (Carpenter, 2007). The thesis advisor and the committee members were also involved to ensure themes were coded and data analyzed in the best way possible.

Data Collection

Data collection was facilitated using semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted over the phone and audio recorded. Interviews took between 45 and 60

minutes. An audio recording device and a back-up device was used for the interviews.

Treatment of Data

Once the interviews were completed, they were transcribed and coded and reviewed to identify themes that arose from the data. Codes were created from the participants' responses from the interviews. Codes were created as the themes are analyzed. Themes were determined by 3 out of the 4 participants answered had similar codes. Pseudonyms were assigned to protect the identity of the participant and the institution where they were employed.

Each transcription is kept on a flashdrive in a secure location to protect confidentiality. All transcriptions will be kept on a flashdrive for three years after the study is completed in accordance with IRB protocol and only the researcher will have access to the flashdrive. A separate flashdrive was maintained with all personally identifiable information of participants separate from the data collected. Once three years have passed, all data will be deleted according to IRB protocols.

Data Analysis

Once interviews were completed, they were transcribed, and the text was coded for themes. According to Saldana (2013), coding is a process that allows the data to be grouped in order to concentrate the meaning and in order to bring deeper explanation. Once the themes were established by the researcher, the analysis provided a deeper understanding of how student affairs professionals support undocumented students during their journey in higher education.

Summary

The chapter outlined the methodological framework that was utilized in this study.

The qualitative approach was used to gain a deeper understanding of the participant's experience working with undocumented students. Codes and themes were determined from the participants' responses. Chapter Four examines the results from the data that has been collected and Chapter Five addresses the findings and future directions for research and practice.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

In this chapter the strategies that Student Affairs professionals use to support undocumented students are presented. These results are presented around the themes that emerged from interviews with the participants from four different institutions and are organized through the framework of the research questions.

Research Question #1. What do student affairs professionals working in dedicated offices perceive to be the unique challenges undocumented students face in higher education?

When discussing the perceived barriers undocumented students face in higher education, the participants discussed their students facing challenges in three main areas: navigating their undocumented status, financial feasibility of education, and finding belonging on their campus. These three themes of personal identity as an undocumented student, financial assistance, and issues of isolation as well as belonging once arriving to their institution play together with how they navigate higher education.

Personal Identity as an Undocumented Student.

Out of the four participants, three identified one of the key challenges undocumented students face in higher education is managing their personal identity with their status as undocumented. Within this theme, there are three topics that relate to the theme of personal identity: disclosing to others, assessing services and resources, and the possibility of higher education.

Disclosing to others

Disclosing one's status to others is a vulnerable situation for undocumented

students, requiring them to risk revealing their status in order to gain access to applicable information for their circumstance. Participant B spoke of how students struggle with this,

> So I think one of the main challenges is that to access almost anything, they have to disclose their status, and having to do that over and over again, and possibly with people who don't understand, that can be traumatic and just frustrating.

Participant A shared how their students are hesitant when coming into the center due to by doing so they are disclosing their status. To make them feel more comfortable, the professionals in the center share parts of their story being undocumented. Participant A shared an example of working with an undocumented student who came to the center apprehensive about sharing their status:

> I met with a student from a rural side of [the state] who has not been really exposed to other LatinX students [and] students of color. Much less been able to disclose his status. He was able to come to the office, and at first he was really hesitant, because he's, 'Oh my gosh am I going to share this about me?'

Participant A recognized that these students needed the staff in the center to be aware of these concerns and to create an environment that was both sensitive and supportive to the fears and uncertainties that they were facing. "I think part of our work, and other professionals talk about this, [since many] undocumented student resource center professionals are also DACA ourselves, we're often sharing pieces of our [own] story, in order to make students feel safe."

Participant A also addressed how undocumented students can be diminished down

to solely being their status. They shared how they approach their undocumented students as students first compared to looking at them as their status,

> Our first question what's your major and what do you want to research? We are a research school after all. I think that takes students aback because they're so used to being reduced to the status and we don't do that. You are a student, a scholar first, and now let's work on how your status affects that and how we can work around it. We make sure that you have access to everything you need to have access to.

Participants discussed the importance of recognizing that for many of their students, the label of undocumented is one that carries fear and uncertainty for the student. In order to provide proper support to the students, it was necessary to both recognize this fact as well as to create an office environment that helped reduce or even eliminate it.

Accessing Services and Resources

Access to information is a challenge for undocumented students and Participant B shared how ally training is important for professionals in other offices, such as financial aid and career services, to be prepared to more effectively support and work with undocumented students. "This just isn't a part of [other Student Affairs professionals'] wheelhouse." They went on to address how many professionals are unfamiliar with the terminology and "the special needs of this population as far as the vulnerability for why wouldn't a student disclose." Participant B went on to acknowledge:

> Ally training is wonderful and, and for us it's great that we have it and I'm glad that so many people participate, but it really should just be a mandatory part of

> everybody's knowledge base, right. Like financial aid. Same thing for career services because the employment piece is such a unique thing. We need a lot more information in that area.

Participant B clarified how it was important for faculty and staff working in offices outside of the undocumented student office to be educated on these issues and concerns as well so that all students can be supported by the institution.

Possibility of Higher Education

When it came to providing information about the possibility of higher education, Participants B and C explained the importance of K-12 partnerships to connect with potential undocumented students to better answer their questions about going to college. Participant C explained that once students arrive at their institution, they have shared that they have not been receiving the message they are able to go to college, as well as often not getting the right information from counselors or admissions to properly navigate their journey into higher education. Participant C went further to explain the narratives they are hearing from the students on their campus.

> In general, we hear from students when they are starting to think about college or when they were in high school. They haven't really gotten the message that college was for them, independent of their grades. Teachers or counselors, while there are some really great ones out there, there's appears to be still a large number of counselors that are saying, ‘Oh, you know, you can't get any financial aid, better work in your parents' business and look for a job’.

Participant B shared their experiences working with out of state students reaching out to their center with questions concerning higher education and the importance of providing that information at the K-12 level saying,

> I've actually had undocumented students call me from out of state for advisement about what they should do. I see that in education across the board. We're not doing a good job of providing that information. We're not doing a good job of working with our K-12 partners to provide that information [to students].

Financial – tuition, health insurance.

All four participants discussed how undocumented students face financial challenges in higher education. The three topics related to financial challenges that were discussed were tuition, financial aid and other costs.

Tuition – instate vs out of state

All of the participants shared that while their state provides in-state tuition, it only helps certain students who meet specific qualifications. Participant A talked about how even though there is financial assistance for undocumented students, they still need to meet the state's requirements for in-state tuition for undocumented students. This includes a mandatory number of years enrolled in an in-state high school along with a graduation date after a certain year. Participant C shared their thoughts on the impact of financial constraints:

> There are a couple hundred scholarships that the institution provides and some of them do require permanent citizenship status, but most of them do not. We now are one of, I want to say 10 States, maybe 11 states, that provide in-state financial aid that's available for DACA and undocumented students as long as they get in-state tuition.

For Participant B, even though their state provides in-state tuition for undocumented students there is a lot of misinformation and confusion about the process. Participant D also shared how even though there is an opportunity to receive in-state tuition for the students, there is significantly less other financial support for these individuals.

Financial Aid – state, federal, institutional

When it comes to financial support, all of the participants described how financial aid a major challenge for the undocumented students on their campus. For work study positions, Participant B shared that if it is state funded, then there are restrictions for undocumented students to be able to take those opportunities. Participants A and C discussed how financial aid will continue to be a major challenge and that not every student is able to qualify for scholarships or other financial alternatives. Participant D highlighted the challenge with financial support but also acknowledged how their state provides assistance, "There's always the lack of financial aid and lack [of] financial support, and that's always a big one. We are very fortunate with undocumented students here that we have the state financial aid." Participant D also shared how more scholarships are being offered without the U.S citizen criteria and how student organizations are stepping in to provide assistance for undocumented students:

> They raised it in four years. Now it's become an endowment scholarship. It will live forever, but that's all work that was done by their peers. All of the [organizations], specifically the Latino organizations, that came together and said, 'we need to help our undocumented, brothers and sisters' and so [we are] very proud of that because where the institution failed, students gathered, organized and said, 'We're going to do this.'

Even though there are restrictions with financial support, one participant discussed alternatives to help this situation. Participant D explained how their office provides scholarships from donors to give the opportunity for undocumented students to be eligible to receive institutional financial assistance. There are conditions with providing equitable access to financial support, but they described how their office maneuvers around these conditions:

> You have to have a discretionary account, that we already have, through our office where donors give us funding obviously for scholarships. And then the students are encouraged to apply to the scholarships. And then, given the criteria and eligibility, they will either receive one or not, but they're in the pool.

Operating within the existing campus systems was critical to successfully providing support to these students.

Other costs – health insurance

Another financial cost has been legal and health insurance. Out of the four participants, only Participant C discussed this challenge as being an issue they were dealing with. They explained how these costs have created challenges for students at their campus and how they must work more to afford these extra expenses saying,

> There have been times where enforcement of immigration and deportation led to students having issues academically. There are certainly examples of students who had to work more to cover legal bills who couldn't readily return a home for fear of sort of bringing enforcement that would then risk other members of the household [to] put them at risk. They had a hard time finding a place to stay. The

> lack of health insurance can mean lack of access to physical or mental [and] health care.

Isolation and belonging

All four participants discussed how the student at their institutions face challenges with isolation and finding belonging on their campus. Specific areas that were shared were their student's identity on campus and connecting to their campus.

Identity on campus

All participants discussed working with students individually in their practice to acquire the specific challenges undocumented students face at their distinct campus. Participant B described by working with students one-on-one, they are able to cater to their specific, individual needs. For Participant D, their department values working close with their students, "Part of it is we need to stay close to them because they're the ones that are going to inform what's happening and where, where are the gaps that we need to meet." Participant A went deeper into the relationship building aspect when working with students one-on-one:

> I think that's just to state that a lot of our work, and how we assess need, is based on these deep conversations that we get to have with students. Our work is not just these 15-minute appointments. We are intentional about building relationships. How do we build relationships with students beyond your checklist approach, beyond your classic mandatory advising appointment?

On the academic side, Participant D shared how their students feel isolated due to their campus being a PWI and large classroom sizes,

> [They attend an] institution that is predominantly white, our faculty look white, and don't look like our students. Ultimately, they teach is very Western. You'd

> talk at them and then the students are expected to regurgitate that information back in some sort of exam. It can be very isolating. There's not a lot of room for one-on-one for with faculty, even with TA, because some of the classrooms are really huge. That is something that our students, [generally] first generation students, students of color, feel they don't belong on college campuses.

Not all undocumented students will feel comfortable voicing their concerns. Both participants C and D shared this challenge at their institution. Participant D stated, "They're not comfortable. They still fear for themselves and their families. And there [are] others [who] feel empowered to be like "I'm here". The whole undocumented, unapologetic and unafraid." Participant C shared,

> Not every student might feel they can voice their requests versus others might feel very comfortable doing that. Trying to elevate student voices, even if they feel comfortable with our office, trying to elevate them elsewhere on campus.

Connecting to campus

Discussing how their community and business have been mostly supportive towards undocumented students was something that all four of the participants mentioned. Two of the participants talked about how the surrounding community has advocated for undocumented students. Participant B shared that the community advocated responding to the community not agreeing with their state's law:

> We've been fortunate, I guess, to have a lot of support. When it was announced the state law that allows local law enforcement to partner with federal agents the city was the first to come out and say, "we're not going to do that". That destroys relationships with the community. And so, we've been fortunate to have that. We

> do have a lot of activism within our community. So, any time something comes down, I think that they do a pretty good job, a really good job, of holding our officials accountable. And protesting and calling things out.

Participant C shared how the local government officials in their community welcomes workers regardless of their immigration status,

> Since I've been here, I've been really fortunate that both institution and city are really supportive of the immigrant community, undocumented community… And it doesn't really matter what their family's immigration background is. We need them as workers.

Participant A shared how even though the community is mostly supportive, not everyone in the community is overtly supportive. They stated, "We've had a lot of support actually. I mean the people who support immigrants have been really supportive of us. There are people who don't support immigrants [but they] have been quiet." Participant D highlighted how the institution is sheltered somewhat where it can protect against these types of incidents:

> No, we haven't really run into any of that. I think we're kind of protected. Again, we're kind of in this bubble. So, I feel like we're kind of, that's why I haven't really run into that. Not really to be honest with you.

The three themes of navigating undocumented student, financial support and isolation/belonging once arriving to their institution were discussed. The themes detailed the specific challenges undocumented students face in higher education. Institutional support for undocumented students will be discussed next.

Research Question #2. How has their institution gone about providing support for the undocumented students on their campus?

When discussing how their institution has provided support for undocumented students on their campus, all participants shared several strategies how they provide assistance. Five themes appeared from the similar strategies which includes on-campus and off-campus resources, partnerships, visibility, outside involvement and face value support. Each theme has detailed approaches from the participants with how they use strategies on their campus.

On-campus and off-campus resources

Every participant shared information about the support their institution receives from on-campus and off-campus resources for their undocumented students. When it came to how their institution provides support, three out of the four participants discussed advising their students and utilizing those one-on-one interactions to give individual assistance. Participant A shared how their graduate assistant works closely with their students,

> Our main advisor is one of our graduate assistants… She's the one who engaged with students also at that deep level, like sits down, talks to them like, let's them take up as much time as they need to take to process [their] own stories. Because we know it's a lot.

Participant B described the intentional services of their institution's one-stop shop for undocumented students to come to one location for all of their needs, such as advising,

> We have a one-stop shop for all of our dreamers. They're able to just come in and I do one-on-one advising with them, not necessarily academic advising. They'll

> still need to go see their academic advisor. I can answer questions if they have something specific like an internship challenge or an employment challenge that's related to their degree…

Another way Participant B's institution has provided support is bringing off-campus immigration attorneys to assist with any immigration questions, "we do bring immigration attorneys on campus. They're able to do an immigration consultation. They're in within the center rather than having to go off campus." Participant C also touched on bringing immigration attorneys to their campus but also being strategic with partnerships:

> We try to strategically find community partners while also kind of trying to balance that with being able to provide services to students here on campus. We work pretty closely with six to seven immigration attorneys and nonprofits that are working in immigration and to sort legal issues.

All of the participants discussed hosting workshops at their institutions that include scholarships undocumented students qualify for and ally training to educate professionals on their campus. Participants A and C discussed leading workshops and trainings for their campus. Participant B discussed hosting ally trainings and DACA renewal clinics for their undocumented students, "We [have] held DACA renewal clinics. Ally training is one of the main things that we're doing right now, just to bring awareness to the entire campus about the specific needs [of] our students."

Similarly, Participant D described all of their allies who complete their training are shown on their directory:

> One of the things that we tell people is once you go through that training, we consider you one of our co-conspirators. We have an 'undocu-ally' directory and they get added to that…It gets pasted on our website so that everybody knows who all who are the allies for undocumented students on our campus.

All participants discussed their intentionality when it came to collaborating with campus and community partners to provide support for their students. For Participant A, their reason to collaborate with certain community partners is to ensure they will connect and be student centered when working with undocumented students, "We have to be very careful of the people we want to do outreach. Because [we] need people who are willing to connect with students in that intimate way." Participant B shared how they collaborate with on-campus departments in intentional areas,

> I partner with those people that we had identified in the critical areas: admissions, financial aid, scholarship office, residency and counseling. I'm even working right now with our campus rec because they are really big employer on campus, and they want to know how can they employ more students.

Participant D went deeper into the value of intentionality of their partnerships, especially if the community partner is able to provide a service the program is not able to provide:

> And then at the same time, I ask 'who can I invite?' as far as what kind of partner with across campus to ensure that the students are getting the resources and services. So with the work that I've been doing through partnerships, and other folks that I trusted, we had been doing a lot of just rubber off services and kind of piecemeal work for students as they were coming in.

Another participant expressed the importance of collaborating with neighboring institutions to ensure their resources are consistent. Participant C shared to not just to focus on the services provided for their campus but the intentionality of working together:

> We're also very close to two other schools that actually share the campus with us and the community college. So, we work very closely with them because we kind of want to make sure that that all three institutions that we essentially have a unified front providing meaningful services.

By working with neighboring institutions, this allows services for these students to be intentional and consistent.

Partnerships

When it came to institutional initiatives that show support for their student community, all participants discussed partnerships that their institution has cultivated. The partnerships have included the community surrounding the university as well as other administrators or departments on their campus. Participant A explained how community partners reach out when situations have occurred that impact undocumented students, “When major immigration things happen, we hear a lot from community partners what can I do to help.” Similarly, Participant B stated, “We work closely with city and just making sure that [our undocumented students] know there's more of a network. It's not just the center, there's a whole community behind them and supportive of them.” Partnerships with neighboring community colleges and their involvement were also important for these students. Participant B stated, “We partner a lot with the community colleges… but I table a lot of different events.” For Participant C, their partnerships focused with high schools and how this shows support to this population for

potential students even before coming to their campus.

All the participants touched on how their institution has stepped up to support undocumented students at their campus. This has included other key administrators and departments stepping in to check in or develop programs to show support for their students. Participant B discussed how their institution's president has made intentional efforts to check in with their department: "I mean [our] president continuing to reach out anytime there's any shift in immigration. Recently with the DACA hearing he's always wanting to know is there [anything] else can we be doing." While Participant A shared, "best support and initiatives around campus I've seen have helped not only students but also the dream centers… There's other partners who do a lot of work to support undocumented students."

Participant C discussed one of the services they provide in their department is funded by an institutional grant. By having the institution fund this service it shows this is important for their students to have to be successful:

> We are funding the immigration attorneys that are coming through an institutional grant and that has been consistently funded. Even though that's only for about two hours with a couple of attorneys every two weeks is like just seeing the message from us, 'Hey, the immigration attorneys are back'. She talks to them about petitions or DACA renewals or screenings for more stable statuses. I think students see [and] know that this is a significant concern.

Participant D discussed the partnerships they developed that have provided additional funding for their students. As well as the department's initiative when it comes to collaborating with other organizations to help provide resources:

> One [program] in particular is called the dream.us scholarship and that's the largest national scholarship program for undocumented students. [We have a] partnership with them and it's specifically for transfer students that are coming into the university that have DACA or would have been DACA eligible and they get up to $7,000 scholarship per year in additional funding to support them.

On the academic side, faculty members have partnered with the institution to help undocumented students. Participant D discussed how the faculty wanted to break the stigma of undocumented students collaborating with faculty:

> From the academic side we have some faculty members that show support for undocumented students in a variety of different ways. One of them is starting a mentor program and it is specifically faculty members [mentoring] undocumented students because that is one way to break that barrier of students being intimidated to work with faculty.

Visibility

Three out of the four participants all discussed the importance of their institution's visibility when it came to showing support for undocumented students. Each participant brought a different perspective with how their institution and their department has demonstrated visible support. For Participant C, their outreach with neighboring high schools allows their program to connect with potential students and to be a visible resource in their community:

> I think making the connection early is really effective. Because we have students come through our doors that say, 'yeah, I remember you were at our high school like two years ago. I'm here and I can ask you those questions.' That is an important sort of bridge.

Participant B discussed the importance of being present in the community when it comes to being visible with their program and to table at different events. They shared that visibility allows them to develop partnerships which they use to seek out those opportunities in the surrounding community. Another detail a participant shared was the visible support from their on-campus departments when it came to their programming or events to tie in an element to help undocumented students. Participant A shared how another department asked if whether hosting an immigration attorney panel and provide consultations afterwards would be beneficial for the students. Participant C discussed the importance of showing visible support to students which includes something symbolic, such as how bringing a banner to their campus was a way their institution showed visible support. They stated how overt support is significant,

> I think even though symbolic, something like hanging a banner, sending immediate responses to significant changes in immigration or regulation, I think that's important. It's by no means where it should end, but that really is a very visible piece.

Outside involvement

Out of the four participants, three discussed being involved with outside activities that were not officially part of their position in order to show support for this population. From the three participants, each had a unique outside involvement to support undocumented students in their community and at their institution. Participant A shared their outside involvement as,

> We also stood [on] a lot of boards and committees. I’m part of the census committee. Because [of the questions related to] citizenship, there's a lot of

> misunderstanding of what the census will include [with] rights… Being part of boards and nonprofits that work with undocumented immigrants. Guest speaking [on] podcasts or radio shows, even if it's outside of my work hours. That's something that we have to do.

Another outside involvement was volunteering with neighboring nonprofit organizations. Participant B shared how they volunteer with an immigration legal services provider for low-income individuals. In their spare time, they also shared their experience facilitating citizenship workshops , "I enjoy [facilitating] the citizenship workshops because that's a really uplifting experience to be able to do which also still supports our students."

For Participant C, their outside involvement revolved around outreach to neighboring high schools. While this was not originally part of their position, Participant C assigned it themselves and now it is almost seen as part of their position from the connections they were able to build,

> I would actually say our high school visits. That's not really something we have ever done until I started taking over here. That's something that's kind of novel where we [have] some connections with high school counselors. Getting maybe five to 10 invites every semester to go out and [visit] schools.

Face Value Support

All of the participants discussed how their institution has provided face value support for their undocumented students. Participant A discussed some issues that have occurred on their campus but how those who come to their center do get the support they need,

> When people come to the center or work with us, we help challenge that climate and create a sense of community and unity. This space where students [feel] welcome. I feel, selfishly speaking, that students [who] work directly with us may have a different outlook on what the climate of campus is than students who may not be coming to the dream center.

For Participant B, they shared the institution's support from the start of the opening of the center, "I think it's been supportive. We haven't had any negative pushback, towards the center either when we opened or since opening. I have never encountered any hostility when we've held events. I haven't heard from any students directly." Participant B also detailed an event that occurred on their campus to support undocumented students and said,

> I [don't] want to call it a protest because it was more like standing in solidarity with DACA. They went out and read the statute and holding up signs and chanting and I was out there and I was standing a little further back because I was trying to see what is the campus climate, not from up close where other people are supporting, but from a little further back where there those comments might be made. And I didn't hear anything.

When it came to Participant C's experience, they detailed how being on an urban campus helped to cultivate an environment that is supportive,

> I think we're very fortunate in that we are a very urban campus in the middle of the city. Having worked at campuses that are both rural and in the city, I generally always observe that campuses that are in more urban centers just generally [have] faculty, staff and students [who] are much more supportive.

Participant C also shared the support from the administration and faculty in an "overt way",

> I would say that from the faculty and the staff side and the administration side, there's fairly vocal and visible support. Faculty will sort of put little signs and markers up that show that this is a supportive space. This is a brave space where our students can expect support… I think overall, I consider myself very lucky to work on a campus like this.

Participant D shared how their campus climate is not so positive but there are spaces for undocumented students to either feel comfortable or supported,

> The campus climate is still pretty bad. But there are some students, some opportunities where at least students know that there is support and if something did occur there's plenty of spaces [a]cross campus that they could count on and people they could count on to talk to and kind of being in a safe space.

Even though Participant D does not have the most positive campus climate, they shared how their campus has developed, "I myself, because I've been here as long as I have, I feel like we've progressed quite a bit through our undocu-ally training, program and, the partnerships that we've created."

The four themes detailed the approaches each participant's institution used on their campus: on-campus and off-campus resources, partnerships, visibility, outside involvement and face value support. The themes demonstrate how the participant's institution has shown support for the undocumented students on their campus. Strategies the participants use to stay informed will be discussed next.

Research Question #3. How do they, and other Student Affairs professionals on their campus, stay informed regarding the issues and concerns of undocumented students?

All of the participants discussed different strategies to stay informed of issues and concerns of undocumented students as part of their professional education. These strategies can be best described in three distinct themes: community involvement, educating others, and professional development. Each theme details how the participants stay informed, as well as how they educate themselves and others.

Community Involvement

All of the participants reported that they are involved with the community in order to stay informed of current events and to see what their partners are doing. Participants A and C discussed how active and visible the organizations are in the community. Participant C stated, "We are very fortunate [that] we have active community organizations that are working with and are run by and for the undocumented community. They're very active [and] visible." Participant A explained the work their organizations are doing and how they represent the community,

> They're cool folks doing great work raising funds for undocumented students. Funds for families who are facing detention and possibly deportations. They do a lot of great work in terms of building that network of support. We have people who are doing podcasts in the community. We have undocuqueer folks where [they are] doing initiatives or they bring artists of all backgrounds, identities and that includes undocumented.

When it came to staying involved with different organizations, Participant D shared about their nonprofit partnerships and the trainings they facilitate within the community. They explained that once someone takes a training from their nonprofit partners, this will lead

them to take their department's training, which has helped with their success. "We get people from K-12 who take the training [and] from other institutions... I think that's been a part of how [and] why we're successful in getting the word out about our program." Participant D stays connected via a network created after Trumps election and shared the following,

> We also have an entity of people here within the area [that] came together after Trump got elected and started a group. That's comprised of people from all over [the] state that created a program [about] know[ing] your rights, trainings for both the undocumented community but also allies.

Participants B and C shared how they see their communities at different levels to support undocumented students and how they stay connected. Participant B shared how the organizations stay engaged in different levels within the city, "But I do see a coordinated effort and across the board trying to communicate at the various levels as much while still doing the work to assist our community." Participant C focused how they stay connected with different levels of leadership where they have shown support for the undocumented community, "On a state and local level, the governorship, the attorney general, [and] local government, all of those are held by individuals who [are] supportive and think hard about the support for the immigrant community."

For Participant B, they stay connected with different organizations in their city. One of the organizations they stay connected with is their Mexican consulate who facilitates gathering with other partners who meet different needs of the undocumented community,

> The Mexican consulate regularly has sessions where they bring community members together and not just from the academic field, but our nonprofit partners who serve different immigrant community needs. Whether that's a health, legal, or housing [need] and just hearing from them to see what is the climate and where do we need to do some work.

Another way Participant B keeps informed with current issues within the community is by partnering with their Hispanic chamber which is an organization who helps identify a city's immigrant population, "Part of that is working with [the] city. And the Hispanic chamber are currently working with a national organization that helps cities figure out [to] identify what their population looks like of immigrants." Another way to have community involvement is partnering with neighboring institutions. Participant A collaborates with community colleges to ensure inclusivity for older undocumented students in the community, "Even when it comes to undocumented students and access to higher education, we certainly work closely with community colleges and our adult learners."

Educating Others

When it came to other professionals staying informed on issues impacting undocumented students, all the participants discussed the importance of educating others. They all specifically facilitated ally trainings which looked different for each participant. Participant A uses social media platforms to share events or resources to be visible when these trainings are conducted, "We host a lot of trainings. We try to be really visible both in trainings but also social media. We have a very active Instagram, active Facebook and Twitter account." Their department uses a combination of their website and social media to get information out there such as documents, "Under our resources that we have a lot

of documents that people can access on print and share it on social media. We gained a lot of traction and it keeps growing each day." One way they try to incorporate in their training is the experience of the undocumented student.

> In addition to hosting trainings, we delve into like undocumented realities and talk about undocumented issues and what students can experience and how to best support [them]. We also have a list serve. We sent monthly emails with information about undocumented students and scholarships available to them and policy changes.

For Participant B, they are currently working on a training module for their faculty and facilitate modified trainings depending on the group as well as using the student voice to advertise the center's trainings,

> Through the dreamer ally training but also through different tailored trainings. If somebody wants the Senator to come and [we] speak to a specific group, we do that. Students come and regularly do interviews about the center so that they can present that to their class. And I really encourage that because I think it's better for classes to find out about the center from other classmates rather than me going in as a staff member.

Participant C facilitates their 'undocupeers' training around three times a year. They have between 40 to 60 attendees for each session which takes around 5 hours to complete the training. Participant C explained the committee they oversee and how they use the student voice when developing the trainings, "I oversee [and] chaired a committee that develops those trainings. We always make sure that students are part of the committee that develops, holds the trainings, and then we separately have student voices that come

in as well." Participant C incorporates common myths about undocumented students and their faculty and staff members' role in supporting them on their campus, "We have that unique opportunity to really support our immigrant and undocumented community." Another element they incorporate is how the immigration status can impact a student, "Understanding sort of what [and] how immigration status can really impact how a student shows up on the campus." For Participant D, they work to educate others through 'undocu-ally' trainings and collaborate with different institutions about this resource,

> It's really coming from the 'undoc-ally' training. I also go around and do presentations at conferences about our program and our trainings. I also do this on a national basis and consistently try to partner with people across campus or other institutions to let them know that we have this.

Professional Development

All of the participants found professional development to be a vital and significant part of their position. Each participant discussed their different professional strategies they take to stay informed. Participant A shared about their connections with local and national organizations who have their own trainings they facilitate. As well as how they use Twitter to stay informed,

> I [tap] into different advocacy organizations that are national. The national immigration law center [and] different platforms like Twitter. I'm very active on Twitter myself and I'm part of a national network of undocumented folks. A national group where we are constantly sharing, posting, bouncing ideas and informing each other what's happening both locally and nationally

Participant B had established connections from their previous that has been helpful with their current position, "I have a lot of connections to legal updates because of my

previous experience in international education. There are several reputable national law firms that I follow." Staying connected with other professionals in the state was another strategy Participant B did to stay informed of best practices,

> Other resources for students, it's not a formal coalition, but each month we do a conference call with some of the other institutions not only in [the state]. But we just kind of talk about anything new, checking the pulse of the state and what's going on [other] campuses just see if anybody's implementing anything new that somebody else might want to use.

Participant C stays informed through opportunities in their region and through other colleagues in their area, "There's a regional conference where we consistently present but get in touch with our colleagues at other universities." Connections on different governmental levels allows Participant C to stay updated on current issues, "Thankfully we had some access to people who are well tied. We also maintain a little bit of contact with some relevant regional governmental and state government offices." These strategies have allowed Participant C to stay connected on the state legislative level.

Participant D gets their updated information from reading, research and participating in different types of professional development. This includes webinars and attending national conferences to connect with other professionals,

> I do a lot of reading [and] a lot of research. I am on newsletters all over the US, a lot of them are immigration law centers. I go to as many training[s] from some of those entities or a webinar. I'm always on those. When I go to national conferences for my professional development, I specifically go and target the work that other institutions are doing [and what] they're presenting.

Staying informed but listening to the student voice is another way Participant D stays connected with the challenges undocumented students face. Participant D intentional conversations with students to listen to their concerns and if the program is able to assist,

> That's really a big part of my job, to stay informed. And that means consistently looking through everything. More important [are] the students themselves. They hear and see things every single day because they live it. They don't have the privileges like me where this part of my job. For them, it's part of their survival. Part of it is constantly having conversations with the students in terms of what's going on and implementing that back into the work that we're doing.

The three themes detailed how the participants stay informed of issues and concerns of undocumented students: community involvement, educating others, and professional development. The themes demonstrated how the participants have educated themselves and others on their campus. Additional needs of undocumented students that are not being met will be discussed next.

Research Question #4. What additional needs of undocumented students do these professionals feel are not being met by their institution and other campus student affairs professionals?

All the participants mentioned needs that are not being met by either the institution or from other professionals. The three themes that emerged include leadership support, additional staffing or funding, and promoting inclusive practices. Each of these themes address key ways and strategies that can be used by higher education professionals to help these students.

Leadership Support

When it came to leadership support, all the participants discussed how their administration has stepped up to address the needs of their undocumented students. Two out of the four participants discussed their center being established from students advocating for additional services. Participant A recounted that the students on their campus advocated for their dream center to higher administration and they were on-board, "The really neat thing about the center is that it started from student leadership. Students went up to higher administration to request the dream center and they immediately responded with yes." Participant A described, "Our relationship with higher admin has been wonderful in that regard."

Participant B had a combination of students advocating for their center and how this became a presidential initiative. From the students approaching their president with the need of the center, the president made intentional efforts to look at best practices and what would work for their campus,

> The dreamer resource center was actually a presidential initiative. The students approached [the] president immediately when [they] joined [the institution] and engaged with them, advocating for the center. Through the process of creating the center, [the president] sent people from [the] leadership team to visit different campuses in California. They visited a center in [the state] to look at best practice[s]. [We] did our own best practice research, to go to those physical sites and do benchmarking to see what our students are saying we need, what their centers doing and how can we replicate that on campus.

Two of the participants discussed how their administration stepped up when specific situations arose on their campus or when DACA was being rescinded.

Participants C and D shared how their administration publicly showed their support for their undocumented students. Participant C specifically shared the day when DACA was rescinded, “As soon as DACA was initially rescinded I think September 17th, there was immediately a public message.” Another moment of visible support was bringing a banner to their campus. Participant C stated,

> There's a large banner that hung at the mayor's office outside of the county building that says [our city] loves and supports immigrants. [Our president] made sure when they removed the banner that it would come to campus and hang here. Very fast turnaround.

For Participant D, their president and administration showed support after the 2016 elections when an increase in incidents of harassment happened on their campus,

> After the elections, a lot of people were devastated we had a president that ran on a platform that he was going to repeal DACA and was anti-immigrant. We had increase in students being harassed by majority [white] students repeating the rhetoric that [was] coming from our president. [Our institution’s president] came out and said, we know undocumented students are on campus and [other] students like Muslim students. [The institution’s president] basically said, we recognize that they're here and [the] university fully supports them. That really gave a lot of hope to our students to make sure they were going to be supportive from somebody at the very top.

Participants C and D shared other moments where their administration has helped their undocumented students. The president being supportive towards undocumented students has allowed the Board of Trustees and other administrative professionals to step up in

other ways for undocumented students. Participant C shared, “We have a board of trustees that is very supportive because our president is supportive [and] have helped us gather around $15,000 in DACA renewal fees that we provided to students.” Other administrative professionals include their legal counsel who has helped with different types of materials relating to their undocumented students,

> [We have a] legal counsel for the institution that has helped. For example, develop some materials around what are our rights and responsibilities as an institution should ICE come to campus, [and] what can the institution do to prepare for a pending [or] end to DACA.

Participant C has seen that their administration is eager to work with their office and cares about their students, “Their willingness to work with us, but have the interest of our students at heart. Rather than ‘let's look at our first and last orders’ [or] ‘protect the institution’. I've been happy about that.” Participant D shared how their department took the initiative of creating a task force to do research on the needs of their students,

> There [is] a lot of support there in my department. They created a task force on the undocumented student experience. This was people from all over the campus to do research around the students need[s], given a lot of what was happening.

Two of the participants also discussed how there is still room for improvements when it comes to their administration and other institutions in supporting the needs of undocumented students. Participant C stated how their faculty and staff does not represent their student population,

> I think [an] area it can grow is we still have faculty and staff that doesn't fully reflect the makeup of our students. We're an HSI, we should have at least a quarter of our faculty and staff be part of the Latinx community.

Participant B focused on how the laws in some states stops other institutions from creating models that will work for their specific campus,

> The unfortunate part there hasn't been more research done and more action taken by universities outside of California. Those models are fantastic, and they are a really good place to start. But other states go, well, we don't have that supportive background. We can't do anything. But that's not true. Educators have to look at their state laws but their own institution [needs to] figure out how [they can] make that work or reframing it right.

Additional Staffing or Funding

Out of the four participants, three of them discussed the need for additional funding or staffing being a need that is not being met by their institution. Two participants discussed funding specifically being an area in need of improvement. For Participant A, not having enough students to quantify the need of additional funding is a challenge, “How do I leverage more funding and more staff when I don't have the magnitude of students to showcase a need, but understanding if it were just one student, we still need all of those things in place.” Participant C discussed how the access to additional funding, specifically financial aid, would be beneficial for students, “Lack of financial aid is always a big one. We are fortunate enough we have some donors we work closely with us in supporting the undocumented community, but that doesn't cover hundreds of students."

Three of the participants discussed how having additional staffing would help their office and undocumented students. Participant A acknowledged that not having enough students can limit the resources provided and the amount of staff dedicated by the institution,

> We don't have a large staff, that has been really hard. And I say that with caution because I know the realities of student affairs. It would be unrealistic to request a seven people staff, knowing that we don't have that population for it. But nonetheless, we [have] one person or a thousand people who are undocumented on our campus, we still need all the resources.

Being the only content expert has brought challenges for Participant B and highlighted the need for where additional staff could help with answering questions or providing referrals,

> Staffing. It's just me. Our front desk is always staffed and there's always people in the office. But really, I'm the content expert, that's really challenging just because any questions that come up, I [have to be] the one to answer or refer them out. Right now, I'm the one who has the direct connections with the resources.

Participant D shared some of the challenges regarding staffing and their office being the only one existent in their state,

> We're one program for the entire state as far as something that's organized in a physical space. It's only one person that is coordinating [the] day to day [work]. And [they are] very new. It's been very challenging to find somebody that this is their niche... It'd be great to have at least one or a few additional staff members. [The coordinator] does the day to day operations, but he does a lot of case

> management. It would be great to have one staff member that could focus on training and getting the word out there. Creating allies and doing some mental health and wellness work with our students.

Promoting Inclusive Practices

Another area that is not being met for these programs is that of promoting inclusive practices. Three out of the four participants shared how their institution can better promote these practices to assist their undocumented students. Participant A shared it would be helpful if the administration double checked when creating new programs or policies to ensure that they are inclusive towards undocumented students,

> I would love for my school, but all schools, to add to their checklist of questions. Like how does this affect or not affect [undocumented students]? When they're creating a policy, or when they are creating a program, or they are revisiting an institutional agenda. [In this process] ask yourself 'how is this affecting or not affecting undocumented students?' Sometimes programs are rolled out and then we don't even know about it until they are announced. And then we're like, 'our students will not qualify for X, Y, and Z.' And now we have to think [about] backup plans and then we have to create marketing materials to let students know that they don't qualify for these things.

Mandatory training for faculty and staff was an area Participant B felt was equally important in promoting inclusive practices,

> I think making training mandatory. I think that's always helpful. It's awesome when your center is a priority of the president and it's amazing to have it as one of [their] initiatives. But I think carrying that forward, the next step [is] making it mandatory especially for faculty and staff absolutely.

Inclusive hiring practices where faculty and staff that represents the student demographic was an area Participant C felt was needed for their campus,

> [For] the larger [student] immigrant population as a whole, getting faculty and staff that represents their experiences and their identities… Students recognize [and] notice what their president, their vice president, [and] chairs of departments look like. Thinking about hiring practices is one thing.

Three themes were discussed with additional needs that are not being met for the undocumented students on their campus: leadership support, additional staffing or funding, and promoting inclusive practices. The themes addressed the additional assistance to further support undocumented students in higher education.

Summary

This chapter provided structure of the participant's responses through the themes in each research question. The participants addressed the challenges undocumented students face, how their institution is supporting undocumented students, the ways they stay informed of issues concerning undocumented students, and the additional needs that are not being met for undocumented students. Chapter V discusses what was learned from the study, recommendations for professionals, additional research needed, and final conclusions.

Chapter V

Discussion

This study looked at how student affairs professionals support undocumented students in higher education. This chapter will highlight the analysis of the results in strategies student affairs professionals take to support these students and the challenges these professionals face. Undocumented students encounter complex situations where the participants discussed making it a priority to stay up to date with the constant legal and political changes around immigration, knowing how to navigate the uncertain framework of state and national policies, and understanding the struggles undocumented students face with societal assumptions. The discussion will look at the results found, suggestions for Student Affairs Professionals, recommended practices, and future implications to better support undocumented students.

Challenges Undocumented Students Face

Previous literature on undocumented students has illustrated the fact that this population faces complex challenges such as navigating their status, obtaining financial assistance in paying for higher education, and navigating the legal obstacles facing them in order to keep persisting (Gonzales, 2009; Serna et al., 2017; Gonzales, 2007). Participants in this study shared that these students continue to struggle with these challenges in higher education today and specifically at their campuses. Some of the challenges that were most significant include navigating their undocumented status, obtaining financial assistance, and finding belonging on their campus.

Navigating Undocumented Status. For some undocumented students, they are introduced to truth of their status as undocumented during the college application

process, applying for jobs, or in situations where a government issued identification is needed, such as a driver's license (Oliverez, 2007). One of the common challenges undocumented students face is how their personal identity is shaped by their status. It is a vulnerable and difficult situation to disclose one's status and this can be especially traumatic having to share your situation over and over again in order to gain access to some of the institution's resources and support. It is difficult for students to discuss their status when considering the threat of deportation for themselves and their family as well as not knowing the professional's ability to discuss the topic with them (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). When disclosing one's status, this is not just a vulnerable situation for the student, but also for their family. This risk of exposure can cause undocumented students to be apprehensive and unwilling to seek help or guidance. Not knowing how the professional will respond, or if they truly understand what "undocumented" means, is a risk for the student that they may feel is too great.

Prior research has looked at the importance of student affairs professionals, especially in the areas of financial aid and career services, taking the initiative to learn how to support undocumented students with their status (Contreras, 2009; Muñoz & Maldonado, 2012; Perez, Muñoz, Alcantar, & Guarneros, 2011). These topical areas are especially crucial for the success of the undocumented student and student affairs professionals need to know the types of financial aid, financial assistance, and employment and internship opportunities for which undocumented students are eligible. Some of the participants in this study shared the importance of professionals in these areas to complete ally training to get more information about terminology and how to best support undocumented students with their unique challenges. Learning the

terminology related to undocumented students provides a better context of the situation and allows allies to identify what other resources or additional information is available to best support these students. It is important for these professionals to be trained for these students to receive the accurate information to help their higher education experience

According to Mouris (2018), undocumented students tend to get misinformation about the application process of financial aid or undergraduate admission because of their status. The participants shared how undocumented students do not receive the narrative they are able to go to college when K-12 professionals are aware of their status. As well as getting this message that college is not for them, they often do not receive accurate information from admissions or counselors as well. This misinformation is often the result of a lack of knowledge on the topic. The participants addressed the importance of sharing this message and have established partnerships with K-12 practitioners in order to change the message to undocumented students that higher education is possible and obtainable. K-12 practitioners have an important role with undocumented student's transition into higher education and Student Affairs professionals can bridge that gap to set them up to be successful.

Schlossberg (2011) stated transition can impact one's life and the people surrounding the individual. Participants in this study discussed their intentional efforts to support undocumented students before their transition to higher education and then again once they are admitted to college. Some of the complex challenges undocumented students face impacted them before they attended higher education where steps to support them before higher education is essential. Several participants were mindful of the current situation in their local K-12 partners to give students access to information and

share the narrative that attending college is feasible. Each undocumented student's transition to higher education is unique and taking the time to connect with the students before they are admitted is important to set them up for success.

Financial Assistance. All the participants discussed how undocumented students face unique financial challenges. Due to these unique challenges, undocumented students must maneuver their state's specific policies and requirements that will determine if they qualify for in-state tuition and other available aid (Serna et al., 2017). Several participants discussed even though their state provides financial assistance or in-state tuition for undocumented students, there are specific requirements their students need to meet to be eligible. There is confusion about these state-specific polices and requirements that can look significantly different for each state which can make the college selection process even more complicated. Professionals can easily limit undocumented students' access to higher education as a result of this confusion, especially with regards to eligibility for financial assistance. Being presented how their status brings unequal access to higher education makes undocumented students feel limited in their future (Pérez & Malagon, 2007). One of the challenges for undocumented students is having access to accurate information and when this information is not easily accessible, it can severely limit their opportunities.

Finding Belonging. Due the stigma surrounding their status, undocumented students often struggle with feeling included and connected to their campus (Muñoz, 2013). All four participants shared that their students struggle with either feeling isolated or in finding belonging as a member of their campus community. This is largely due to not seeing their identities represented on-campus and in large classroom sizes. According

to Muñoz (2013), undocumented students tend to hide in the shadows if there is an absence of visible undocumented students and may not be as open to sharing their identity. As a result of this lack of representation, undocumented students may not feel comfortable sharing their personal stories. Several participants discussed building intentional relationships with their undocumented students in order to ensure they feel at least one connection to the campus and that they are being supported for the challenges they will face. With Sanford's challenge and support theory (Sanford, 1962), it is important for student affairs professionals to be intentional with their support of undocumented students (Bohan, 2019). Giving thoughtful support that meets their individual needs is important to build that connection and allow the student to find that sense of belonging on their campus. Undocumented students who attend an institution that does not have representation often struggle with finding how they fit in on their campus.

According to Yosso (2006), campus resources play a positive role with building a sense of community and providing a supportive environment for students on-campus. The surrounding community can be crucial with how undocumented students perceive whether or not they belong at their campus. All the participants discussed how their communities have advocated in some sort of fashion for their undocumented students. This shows that support beyond the institution can influence and create a supportive environment for these students. Undocumented students face challenges not just being accepted on their campus but the surrounding community, and. this factor can impact their sense of belonging and their comfortability that is beyond the institution.

Institutional Support.

Previous literature has looked at the importance of institutional support and the institution's role with motivating, as well as directing, Student Affairs professionals to build a skillset to better assist undocumented students (Mouris, 2018; Barnhardt et al., 2013; Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017). Participants in this study shared how their institution, and they themselves, have supported undocumented students through building connections to on-campus and off campus resources, creating partnerships, increasing visibility, developing outside involvement, and the importance of face-value support.

On-campus and off-campus resources. Due to the perceived lack of support from institutions and professionals, undocumented students often report feeling isolated from the campus community and the resources that could support them in their educational journey (Cuevas & Cheung, 2015). Institutions can support undocumented students in a variety of different practices depending on the needs of the students at a particular institution. According to Lauby (2017), professionals who work with undocumented students need to understand how their role is important and get to know their students in order to provide the resources or opportunities they need. Advising is one way for professionals to get to know students' individual challenges and provide individualized assistance. All the participants discussed using advising to work one-on-one with their students and to provide support with processing their stories. Part of working with undocumented students is to give them the space to discuss their personal narratives and to validate the challenges they have faced. Looking at Schlossberg's self in the transition model (2011), it is important to recognize that each student's self is unique and integral to how they will process their transition in higher education. For some

undocumented students, they might have never been able to discuss their story or status with someone outside of their family and these personal conversations can be emotional. Providing a comfortable, safe space to process this can provide a tremendous amount of support.

Another resource some undocumented student resource centers have provided is engaging immigration attorney assistance to provide free legal support for their students (Sanchez & So, 2015; Kuroki & Preciado, 2018). Half of the participants shared how their partnerships with immigration attorneys helped students navigate legal issues and allowed them to not to have to go off-campus. At the Titan Dreamers Resource Center (TDRC) at California State University- Fullerton, which was not a participant in this study, the center facilitates workshops, programs and ally trainings for their faculty and staff to be educated (Kuroki & Preciado, 2018). Hosting these kinds of workshops relating to different topics helps undocumented students (i.e. DACA renewal clinics) and facilitating ally trainings, not just for their professionals on-campus but for the surrounding community, are ways that centers can support their students. These educational opportunities to campus faculty and staff helps them to be better informed of the needs of this population. Another way to further the support from their allies on-campus who complete the training is to create a directory where everyone on the campus knows who are trained and supportive towards undocumented students. Providing this mixture of services, focusing on supporting undocumented students and educating others, helps these students by providing a supportive community committed to their success.

Partnerships. Previous research has looked at Student Affairs professionals and the knowledge of how they support undocumented students (Contreras, 2009; Muñoz &

Maldonado, 2012; Perez, Muñoz, Alcantar, & Guarneros, 2011; Valenzuela et al., 2015). Centers and other programs can assist in the identification of allies to assist undocumented students as well as by training those who wish to be allies (Cuevas and Cheung, 2015; Kuroki & Preciado, 2018). It is important to train and connect with those in the surrounding community who will come across and work with undocumented students. Several of the participants highlighted the importance of having strong community partnerships and how being visible at different events within the community sent a message. Being strategic with community partnerships, and training those who have the potential to work with these undocumented students, helps to build a network of support.

Enriquez (2011), found that teachers in K-12 played a critical role when it came to encouraging undocumented students to apply for higher education and assisting them with the application process. Several of the participants discussed creating partnerships with local high schools and training those who work in those settings, as well as conducting outreach at high schools to answer questions, were tools used to establish the college as one that was both welcoming and supportive of this population. Partnering with high schools and local institutions was also important in order to provide updated information and create a bridge for these students into higher education.

All of the participants discussed how their institution has stepped up in different ways to support undocumented students. For some, important administrators saw a need to provide for services for undocumented students which led to the development of their centers. Each situation was unique in how their administration, institution, faculty, or partners stepped up to show support for their students in a time of need. These types of

partnerships provide a different kind of assistance, but they all provide a tremendous amount of help to address different challenges these students face.

Visibility. According to Cisneros and Cadenas (2017), visible signs of support and services will show undocumented students that their campus is an ally. Several of the participants shared examples of visible support from outreach programs geared towards undocumented students, supportive banners and signs, and institutional involvement with the community. These examples demonstrate how important visible support is for undocumented students to know there is assistance and resources in place for their success. One of the most impactful ways to show support is when higher administration displays that support in an overt form. According to a study conducted by Teranishi et al. (2014), undocumented students wish to get an acknowledgement or a public statement that administrators support them. From posting a symbolic banner, or other overt displays, this shows how the leadership of the institution is invested in these students and how they are welcomed on campus. Support can be subtle, especially where state politics and other issues make more overt displays problematical, but they still can have the same impact as overt support. The combination of those subtle and overt support gestures can truly make an impact on these students feeling valued on their campus.

Outside Involvement. Several participants shared examples of outside involvement that goes beyond their official job description but still impacts undocumented students in different ways. Examples included governmental agency and committee involvement, participation with podcasts or radio shows, nonprofit work, facilitating citizenship workshops, and outreach at high schools. These involvements allow professionals to advocate for their students at their institution and at different levels

in the community. Their outside involvement allows these professionals to educate others on current information and spread information effectively. These types of outside involvements are different ways to support undocumented students and usually fall within the professional's passion area of the work they do.

A study conducted by Cisneros and Valdivia (2018) interviewed professionals who specifically work in undocumented student resource centers and found several who are also involved in the community facilitating presentations to K-12 practitioners and bridging the gap to higher education. One of the participants discussed staying connected with K-12 partners to facilitate trainings to educate those professionals to better support undocumented students. This includes facilitating information of what it means to be undocumented and what types of aid these students qualify. Professionals who work in undocumented student resource centers need to be involved with the community to stay informed of events and to be visible as an active resource. According to Cisneros and Valdivia (2018), some of their participants work with local communities to help potential students at high schools and facilitate presentations on going to college. This helps undocumented students navigate the college process and train those who help facilitate the journey to higher education.

Cisneros and Valdivia (2018) stated professionals rely on connections with state, local, and national organizations to increase their resources and support for their students. Several participants shared the importance of being visible within the community, as well as building their connections with local organizations and different levels of civic leadership. This allowed them to stay informed on current issues from different levels to know what is going on the state and local level. This better allowed them to prepare their

work to be more efficient and how to best adapt their practice for their students. Different types of community involvement create beneficial relationships from these partnerships and helps undocumented students within the community.

Face Value Support. A study conducted by Teranishi et al. (2014), found that undocumented students reported feeling high levels of mistreatment from administrators, counselors, faculty, and campus police due to their legal status. These types of situations can be related to the campus climate and the practices institutions take to support their students. This includes intentional interactions by professionals with students to provide themselves as a supportive resource on their campus as well as how their institution has progressed with improving their campus climate. Campus climate impacts the experience of higher education for undocumented students and is a place where professionals have a large impact. For Student Affairs professionals, it is important to acknowledge their campus climate towards undocumented students and to identify strategies or best practices to support this population to combat the negative interactions they might be facing.

According to Teranishi et al. (2014), undocumented students want administrators to recognize they are on their campus and to show visible support that administrators, as well as faculty, are allies. Two participants discussed their institution's support from the start of their center and the administration's visible support. One participant shared how important the vocal and visible support was but recognized that ease in showing the support could be partly due to being an urban campus. The setting of the institution can be a factor in how supportive the campus administration can publicly be and that in turn impacts the campus climate. If these notions of support are shown to undocumented

students, they are more inclined with being comfortable with interacting with administrators and receiving support.

Staying Informed with Issues and Concerns.

All of the participants discussed strategies they take to stay informed and how they educate others on their campus. As laws, policies, and regulations constantly change, professionals need to establish both ways to educate themselves on these changes but also create opportunities to provide this education to others on their campus.

Professional Development. When it came to professional development, all the participants discussed different strategies they used to educating themselves, but they all recognized the importance of doing this. According to Mouris (2018), Student Affairs professionals do not go through formal training in serving undocumented students and that the decision to gain the appropriate training was self-started. All the participants took the initiative to learn about different practices in this area and to stay informed on the ever-changing information related to undocumented students. A valuable strategy used was to take local organizations' trainings and to stay active on social media. This allowed the professional to be updated on information regarding undocumented students and develop partnerships with others serving this community.

Another form of strategic professional development the participants used is their connections from previous positions and using their own personal network. This allowed them to get information related to undocumented students, as well as policies and guidelines dealing with immigration in general. Building a network with other institutions helps with learning about the best and most successful practices other professionals are taking. Several participants discussed presenting at regional or national conferences to

find others interested in this population in order to build their network. These are all sources of information that are not provided by their home institution but rather are self-initiated by the professional in order to receive the most up to date information to best serve their students. By developing a network of partnerships whose expertise can help establish best practices for undocumented students, these professionals took ownership for their own professional development and continuing education.

Educating Others. Previous research has looked at the different areas of Student Affairs professionals with their interactions, and their knowledge, when supporting undocumented students (Mouris, 2018; Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010; Barnhardt et al., 2013; Bensimon, 2007). All of the participants facilitate ally trainings to educate professionals on their campus to better support undocumented students. According to Cisneros and Valdivia (2018), these trainings help deepen the knowledge and understanding for faculty, staff, and students to best support the undocumented student population. Using social media is one significant way to stay connected with educating others and to promote these trainings. Other important efforts included sending monthly emails and having a dynamic website to get up to date information out. One key element incorporated in ally training is sharing the experiences undocumented students face. This provides a personal touch with their trainings and provides context with the students' daily challenges and specifically, those in higher education.

According to Bensimon (2007), acknowledging your student demographic and providing training opportunities for professionals can allow them to adjust their techniques to better serve these students. Several of the participants discussed using the student voice in different capacities in developing and promoting these educational

programs. Using the student voice often has a greater impact for those who are being educated on the topic and empowers students to advocate for those additional needs that are not being met. In addition, having a student advertise the trainings or the services that are provided by the center resonates more with this population compared to when professionals share this information. The participants all recognized the importance of being strategic with how they utilize the student voice to get the message out there about these opportunities and in utilizing the student demographic to improve representation, as well as the need to have these opportunities. Another way of educating others is not just on the campus, but at different conferences as well as partnering with neighboring institutions. By hosting these programs, it shows that there is support for undocumented students from their institution as well as from those who facilitate the trainings.

Institutional Efforts and Actions to Support Undocumented Students

While studies have shown that there are additional needs that are not being met in supporting undocumented students (Barnhardt et al., 2013; Cisneros & Valdivia, 2018; Mouris, 2018), the participants in this study identified the three top needs of their current students and campuses as being the need for support by senior leadership, additional funding for students and staffing, and promoting inclusive practices.

Leadership Support. The institutions in this study all had provided clear support for supporting this population to the creation of programs and services directed towards undocumented students. Participants shared how their centers were advocated for by faculty and students to the president and senior leadership. In addition to advocating for the centers, faculty, administrators, and students demonstrated the need for the center and how it would help their students. Following through on these recommendations

demonstrated the administration's support and are commitment for the success of their undocumented students.

Institutions should show their commitment and support to create a welcoming space for their students in various ways (Teranishi, et al., 2014). This can include showing overt support in a time of need. One participant's institution did this when DACA was rescinded with a public message reinforcing the institution's support for their students. Being immediate and intentional with this kind of support can be tremendously impactful for these students by showing that their administration is by their side. Another example was that as a result of the 2016 elections, an increased number of incidents of harassment toward undocumented individuals was experienced (Crawford & Hairston, 2018). Institutional leaders who responded publicly and forcefully to these incidents showed support for undocumented students by addressing the increased amount of harassment some students faced after the elections at their campus. Situations where institutional leadership demonstrated clear support are critical for undocumented students to feel valued and cared for at their institution. Institutional leaders need to acknowledge how powerful their role is and when they need to step in to show they are committed to their students.

Even though support was in place for many of these participants, several discussed areas of improvement from their campus leadership. One area of particular importance is in the area of inclusive practices with hiring staff and faculty across all departments that better represents student identities and experiences. This can make a significant difference with how undocumented students engage with faculty and staff by

seeing more people with similar identities who are more likely to be able to understand their experiences.

According to Cisneros and Valdivia (2018), institutions should assess the organization of their institution when deciding to create an undocumented student resource center to ensure the best approach for their campus. Some institutions might not pursue a center on their campus due to challenges of their state laws and not having the support from the top to implement this on their campus. Even though this is a challenge, it is possible for institutions to adapt a center on their campus that will work with these students within the framework of state support and restrictions. Senior leaders need to recognize when they need to advocate for their undocumented students and being intentional with approaching how to fit these programs to their campus.

The differences in leadership support was shown more clearly with participants who work at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and Predominately White Institution (PWI). Those who worked at a classified HSI tend to have clear and open administrative support built in due to the demographic of their students. Their higher administrative leaders were invested with the ongoing progress of the center and have shown support overtly compared to those who worked at a PWI. Those that worked at an institution classified as a PWI discussed how their campus climate has impacted the experiences of their undocumented students. Even though timely support was given, at times their senior leaders limited their overt support due to the political climate that was impacting the campus. It is clear that the political climate and student demographic can shape the way leadership support is shown.

Funding for Students and Staffing. Cisneros and Valdivia (2018) found that due to undocumented students not being eligible for federal financial aid, it is important for institutions to develop innovative tactics to support students financially. This includes acknowledging when financial needs are not being met and how this is a challenge for these students to afford higher education. Even though states have worked strategies to provide some types of aid for undocumented students, there is still a need for those who might not meet all of the requirements. Some undocumented students can meet state requirements and become eligible for state financial assistance, but not all. Those who are not eligible will be restricted even more in their pursuit of higher education and may be barred entirely due to their circumstances. This can be a challenge where financial needs that are not being met or when an institution does not have the quantifiable amount of students to show there is a need. This can be a challenge for professional staff who are spread thin trying to support students who are dealing with multiple issues that arise from this lack financial support.

Another challenge for the centers is one of limited staffing, additional staff members are needed to help institutions in providing proper support for undocumented students. There are significant challenges with having limited staff as some of the centers were operating with only one full time professional who specifically works with undocumented students. Additional staff members are needed to support the complex challenges undocumented students face and to provide adequate resources for all needed programs and services (Cisneros & Valdivia, 2018). One clear challenge in getting additional staff is not having “enough” students to quantify the need for an additional staff member. If students are not identified, then the actual numbers needing support may

never accurately reflect the true needs. Cisneros and Valdivia (2018) found that professionals who work in undocumented student resource centers are content experts and are knowledgeable about institutional processes that pertain to undocumented students. For several of the participants, they discussed the difficulties of being the only staff member in the center who specifically works with undocumented students and for some, their institution was home to the only established center in the state and they were called on to support or advise other institutions on this population as well.

Passion Area. All of the participants in this study shared a passion for working with undocumented students. From the personal connections they make to the work they do, this passion drove them to support undocumented students the best they can. They are invested in supporting undocumented students and understand they are often one of the few people on their campus who can understand the complex challenges these students face in higher education.. Professionals in these positions understand there will be systematic challenges from this type of work, but they are motivated to find strategic solutions to best support these students. Information is always changing related to this topic and these professionals are motivated to take the initiative to do extra tasks to ensure their success.

Promoting Inclusive Practices. Several participants acknowledged the importance of promoting inclusive practices to help better assist undocumented students in higher education. Barnhardt, Ramos and Reyes (2013) found that institutions often do not provide a clear direction on how professionals are able to assist undocumented students especially in the areas of financial aid, academic advising, and career counseling. Mandatory training can help professionals in these areas with how to best

assist undocumented students in their complex situations. By making training mandatory and keeping individuals accountable, it allows faculty and other professionals to be equipped to better work with these students.

Barnhardt et al. (2013) found that a lack of direction and clarity of campus policies related to immigration can impact professionals to know how to best support undocumented students. Half of the participants shared that campus programs and initiatives were often seen as not being equitable for undocumented students if they were considered at all. By determining if an initiative or policy is inclusive towards undocumented students prior to implementation, it is beneficial not just to the students, but also for the professionals who may be short staffed and unable to address these types of situations after implementation.

Implications for Student Affairs Professionals

This study uncovered a combination of issues that undocumented students and Student Affairs professionals experience that highlights the importance of these two populations working together. Even though this dynamic is in place, it is important for Student Affairs professionals and institutions to acknowledge the challenges undocumented students face and the initiatives that need to be instituted to best assist these students.

Creative Funding Strategies. Funding will be a constant challenge for undocumented students to afford higher education and developing creative strategies to find ways to support these students in unique ways will be very beneficial. This includes utilizing alternative revenue streams such as training registration fees to provide funds to purchase of books for a lending library, support campus programs and services, or other

initiatives of the center. Advocating for student organizations to fundraise for scholarships for undocumented students is another way of providing direct financial support. Whether direct or indirect, creative funding ideas can help the students both individually and through providing resources that will support all students.

Assess Your Campus Climate. The campus climate of an institution has a direct impact of the undocumented student's experience. It needs to be assessed formally by Student Affairs professionals to ensure that the campus environment is safe and welcoming for undocumented students and if not, where attention and efforts should be directed to make improvements. Student Affairs professionals and higher administration need to recognize how the state of their campus climate will impact this especially vulnerable population.

Identifiable Support. Due to this population being hidden, showing overt and clear support of them will resonate with these students and allow them to feel comfortable on-campus. This includes showing a symbolic representation of support such as a banner or creating a visual representation for those who complete ally training to post on one's door or office. Easily identifiable resources such as an online ally directory will also provide information on the faculty and staff that are supportive towards this population and act as an obvious resource to students before they self-identify. These students need to see this support as showing directly that they are wanted at their campus.

Representation with Faculty and Staff. Representation among faculty and staff is important and vital to reflect the student population, especially for institutions that are Hispanic Serving. These institutions need to create intentional hiring practices and hire professionals that can connect and support these students. When the faculty and staff of

an institution visually represent the students' experiences and identities, students will feel greater comfort and engaged with them knowing that they are able to understand their stories. Since professionals will likely not know a student's documentation status, the student's comfort level with sharing this information is critical and seeing a diverse campus community makes disclosure more likely.

Institutions need to be aware of how their hiring practices will impact the campus environment and in turn, retain these students. Students can see if their institution places a priority on hiring a diverse faculty and staff. Whether or not an institution is successful in creating a diverse faculty and staff, institutions need to find ways to keep professionals informed of issues, concerns, and policies affecting this population through mandatory trainings or other educational opportunities to be better equipped to work with undocumented students.

Know Your Network. The complex challenges undocumented students face provides the need for support to come from different levels. Student Affairs professionals need to know how they can assist with the undocumented student experience and when, and to who, to do referrals. Higher education professionals need to acknowledge their role and limitations and when to seek additional resources to ensure the success of undocumented students.

Recommendations for Future Research

Research on Resource Centers. This study should be expanded to assess all the undocumented student resource centers across the United States and focus on the professionals who work in these centers. This would provide a better understanding of the challenges these professionals face, identify best practices, and provide recommendations

for professionals in similar roles. A study could also allow for a more comprehensive assessment to be completed to determine the different models institutions used to develop their centers.

Compare PWI vs. HSI. Replicating this study to specifically look at the differences between PWI and HSI institutions could provide better understanding of the undocumented student experience, campus climate, and the challenges Student Affairs professionals face with supporting undocumented students. This would allow researchers to determine whether student demographic classifications have an impact on the undocumented student experience.

Compare State Support. A study could be done to compare the differences that undocumented students receive in different types of state support and how this difference impacts the students and the professionals working there. For institutions who have challenges with state support, sharing of strategies to combat this would help other institutions in similar situations.

Compare 2-year and 4-year Institutions. Although several two-year institutions were invited to participate in this study, none chose to be included. However, there are several 2-year institutions with centers who serve undocumented students. Professionals who work at a 2-year institution may have a different experience compared to professionals who work at a 4-year institution. A future study may discover how these professionals navigate different challenges and serve different sub-groups within the undocumented student population.

Replicate Study. This study could be replicated to include a larger sample size of Student Affairs professionals who specifically work with undocumented students across

the country. This would determine if the findings are consistent across institutions and geographic regions of the country.

Conclusion

A new wave of research has been focused on undocumented students the past 20 years due to the shifting climate around immigration and how this population is disadvantaged before entering higher education. Many of these students come to the United States at a young age and are forced to address the situation they are placed in unprepared. Circumstances are influenced of their parent's aspirations to provide better opportunities for their children and many of them may not discover their true status until it becomes time to consider college. This study was designed to look at how Student Affairs professionals have a critical role with supporting undocumented students both before and during their time in Higher Education.

This study showed how vital the roles of the Student Affairs professionals are to this population. Partnerships between these dedicated professionals and leaders in higher education have a major impact on the success of undocumented students. The complex challenges undocumented students face cannot be tackled with just one professional but requires support on multiple levels of the educational journey. This includes K-12 administrators, non-profit organizations, immigration attorneys, higher education leadership, and officials in local and state government. Institutions need to hold themselves accountable for how much they can impact and support the success of their undocumented students. It is a disservice to limit their opportunities due to their status and not provide access to the opportunities that their peers receive. These students have proven they have the resiliency to accomplish their dreams, as well as adapting to a

country they call home, and it is the duty of the institution to meet and create an equitable playing field for them to be successful.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Email Communication

Hello _____,

My name is Jacqueline Garcia and I am currently a graduate student in College Student Affairs program at Eastern Illinois University. My program requires an original research project and I am doing my thesis topic on how student affairs professionals support undocumented students. I hope to interview professionals who specifically work with undocumented students in their individual practice and learn more about how they support them.

Individuals would be asked to participate in a confidential phone interview of 45-60 minutes duration. Institutional and personally identifiable information will not be provided as both institutional demographics and participants will be assigned an alias for the study.

I would like to invite you to speak with you on this topic if you available and interested in participating. If you are unavailable and there is another staff member in your office that might be willing, I would appreciate you forwarding this email to them.

Thank you for your time and consideration and if you have any questions please send them my way.

Warmest regards,

Jacqueline Garcia

Appendix B

Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

How Student Affairs Professionals Support Undocumented Students

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Jacqueline Garcia and Dr. Jon Coleman (faculty sponsor), from the Counseling and Higher Education at Eastern Illinois University.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether or not to participate.

You have been asked to participate in this study because due to your position focuses on supporting undocumented students.

- **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to look at how student affairs professionals support undocumented students in their individual practice. Along with the perceived challenges undocumented students face and the challenges with supporting them.

- **PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a phone interview which will take approximately 60 minutes. The phone interview will be audio recorded using two different devices. After the phone interview is completed, it will be transcribed. A copy of the transcription will be sent to you to review for accuracy of the transcription. The data from the study will be kept on a flash drive for three years after the study is completed. After the three years, the data will be deleted and flash drives will be destroyed.

- **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

Participants will answer questions how they support undocumented student which might include describing potential traumatic experiences undocumented students they have worked with in their position have faced. Potential discomfort might occur from the interview questions when discussing the challenges as a student affairs professional supporting undocumented students.

- **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

Potential benefits from the study is to gain a better understanding of the practices student affairs professionals take to support undocumented students. Along with how other

student affairs professionals can utilize these methods and support services on their campus to support undocumented students on their campus.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of storing identifiable information separate from other survey responses and shredding paper copies when data analysis is concluded. The data obtained will be maintained in a safe, locked, password-protected, location and will be destroyed after a period of three years after the study is completed.

- **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Participation in this research study is voluntary and not a requirement or a condition for being the recipient of benefits or services from Eastern Illinois University or any other organization sponsoring the research project. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits or services to which you are otherwise entitled.
There is no penalty if you withdraw from the study and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

- **IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact me at jrgarcia2@eiu.edu or my thesis advisor Dr. Jon Coleman at jkcoleman@eiu.edu.

- **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

If you have any questions or concerns about the treatment of human participants in this study, you may call or write:

Institutional Review Board
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Telephone: (217) 581-8576
E-mail: eiuirb@www.eiu.edu

You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay members of the community not connected with EIU. The IRB has reviewed and approved this study.

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

1. Please describe your professional journey in higher education and how you came to work with undocumented students.

2. Please describe your office and what it does on your campus for undocumented students?

3. What programs or services does your office or department provide for undocumented students?

4. What is the size of your undocumented student population and are you classified as a Hispanic Serving institution?
    a. Follow-up question trying to get information about your institution

5. Please describe how your office fits in with the administration (e.g. who you report to, your key partners) and your relationship with senior campus leadership?

6. How does your office/you personally assess the needs of these students?

7. What are some common challenges you see these students facing in higher education in general and at your campus in particular?

8. What are some of the institutional initiatives that you feel show support to this student community?

9. What is your impression of the campus climate towards undocumented students?

10. How do you assess the support from the surrounding community towards undocumented students?

11. How do you inform, educate, or develop other faculty, staff, and students on your campus about undocumented students?

12. How do you stay informed on current issues and information?

13. What are some challenges you have faced as a student affairs professional with supporting the needs of undocumented students?

14. Are there any restrictions to financial support for undocumented students you are able to share?

15. Are there any activities that you do outside of your official position that provides support or services to this particular student population that you feel comfortable sharing?

16. Have there been any problems or issues you have encountered with politicians, businesses, and your surrounding community?

17. What areas do you feel your institution could work on with supporting undocumented students?

    *Follow-up questions used as needed